

DEGENESIS

LA DÉCRÉATION EXPLIQUÉE ?



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Degeneration or decreation explained ?

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Introduction.

Nature, culture, humanism, counter-culture, against-nature, posthumanism, so many concepts that have served to represent our body in relation to the world. The body is a permanent reference for men and this since prehistoric times. Body awareness is inseparable from the imagination of life and the vision of the world. From this swarm of perceptions emerges innumerable concepts varying according to myths and beliefs, material conditions, relationships with others, in short, the culture inherent in a specific group in a given environment.

The body can be healthy, meeting criteria of health and functional balance or fall ill, be a carrier of suffering. It is therefore both a concept and a notion. It can appear as good, source of energy and vitality or bad.

“The body conditions our experience. It designates my irreducible way of being in the world. (...) With the notion of flesh, which is not another name for the body, but the spiritual texture of the world and of my body, the ontological horizon becomes clearer: the flesh is not matter but the entire cycle of relations between the individual and his entourage, the interweaving of the visible and the seeing, the winding of the tangible in the body”. (Jacqueline Russ, *The March of Contemporary Ideas*, 1994, p.64)

When we approach the history of the body, it is essential to restrict its field of investigation in order to find one's way around it because the subject is so vast, vast like the world. Our study will therefore be restricted to the notion of the socialized real body versus the imaginary body in Western art. The body in all its states, this will be our guideline for understanding art in general more specifically contemporary art of the last decades of the XXth century until today.

Art and religion are twins born in the same Paleolithic cave. From Prehistory until the end of the Middle Ages, the artistic representation of the idealized and real body will be intimately linked to the religious precepts in force. This is why, from cave paintings from the Paleolithic to modern works, the body is a permanence in art.

The adored body / nature crosses all of Prehistory. From Antiquity emerges the body socialized by politico-religious power until its complete negation in the Middle Ages. The Renaissance announces the body freed from the theological yoke. But the newly liberated body quickly falls under the scalpel of anatomists who seek knowledge in these cogs of flesh, organs and nerves. A mechanistic philosophy is born, the body becomes a machine. From sacred, the body becomes an object, an object of all possible “demiurgic” manipulations. While the profane body acquires more and more autonomy thanks to the imagination of artists, the real body is degraded by slavery, the harsh conditions of industrial work in the 19th century. The “cannon fodder” body rubs shoulders with idealized representations of academic art where the human body represents “the

most beautiful work of God on Earth”.

From the *White Square on a White Background* by Malevich (1918) to the *Noir sur Noir* by Reinhardt (1960), the art of representing the idealized body reaches its limit, no experimentation or discovery is possible since “all or nothing” were painted. The idealized body gives way to the realism of the bruised real body despite the dreamlike attempts of surrealist and neo-primitive painters.

Of the two world wars, the body is the loser. The artist realizes that man is not what he should be, that his life is an aberration, an alienation dictated by fear. The body disappears from Western pictorial art at the same rate as plant and animal species disappear from ecosystems. To escape this foretold death of art, we saw the emergence of a new field of artistic experimentation during the 1970s with an equally original material : the body. The body as artistic material can only refer to this other dimension which is the notion of the body as a relation to the physical and metaphysical world.

Suddenly with sadistic performances against the body, organic sculptures from rotting meat and flesh, exhibitions of waste and detritus, the artist resolutely sided with the hatred of the organic. The whole of the twentieth century is crossed by barbarism, fascism, Nazism and genocidal exterminations of which the ugliness, the destruction in art would be the pale reflection. The historical importance acquired by the XXth century, the threats of destruction and its corollary, the ugly, that the aesthetics of beauty is no longer primarily the basis of art. The body begins its “decreation.” “

In the XXIth century, for the first time in the history of humanity, the artist, now cyber shaman offers a vision of man which involves physical disappearance and is considering leaving the biologically idyllic cyberspace. Materialism collapses, the body is annihilated in the immateriality of post-humanism, the philosophy of pure spirit / octet supporting the new but final idealization of the disembodied man.

In 1904, the great mathematician Ernst Zermelo formulated a theorem considered to be the crowning achievement of modern mathematics and of all set theory:

“Everything together can be well ordered”

“What Zermelo demonstrated is that any set, whatever it may be, has a relation of choice allowing the totality of the elements of the set to be well ordered. This is a result of great significance, because it applies to all sets... and therefore to the set of all possibilities, ie to Being as well as the Universe”. (Charon, *The Lights of the Invisible*, 1985, p.122-123)

Thus our body has the relation of choice allowing it to be ordered according to the major laws of the universe but also has a choice of relations which can mess it up. The incomprehension of the great laws of the Universe, of life and of nature is matched only by the ignorance of our planet, of its ecosystem, ultimately of our own body. Pollution, among other things, becomes the expression of a bad choice of freedom preventing to properly order all the elements of the

whole. We will see that the West, mainly, has adopted a relation of choice which condemns the body to its biological decreation for the benefit of the artificial.

Prehistory

The theophany of the body.

Natural body

The characteristic feature of the first peoples is the conception of the body as a miniature replica of the cosmos in direct communion with the surrounding nature. The body is the bearer of meanings revealed by ornamentation, the cosmetic of the Greek “*kosmetikos*”, which “therefore consists in putting on oneself with cosmic qualities”, in becoming, in a way, “in conformity with the cosmic order”. The primitive body paintings and dance / trance express a cosmic wisdom inscribed in the body in harmony with the rational intelligence of nature. (Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, *Religion and the Order of the World*, 2004, p.349)

The first universal cult to appear is that dedicated to the human skull (ancestor cult) as a reminder of a dead being (parent or enemy), witness to the passage from life to death. This cult is present in all civilizations and at all times, whether we think of Amerindian scalps, the withered heads of pygmies or more recently the heads cut off by the guillotine.

This first cult to the dead will materialize in the collection of skulls (animals and humans) as a collective protection fetish (relic). But even more so because this cult of skulls also ritualizes the practice of cannibalism by the absorption of the marrow of the bones and of the brain (the divine substance) with the same finality as that observed in the sacrifice of the animal: God (animal-totem) and man cannot die because their substance (what is in itself, what is permanent in things and beings that change) is continuously absorbed (eternal life). The body is no longer mortal but rather immortal; the living body also becomes sacred.

At least since Neanderthal man, we know that sacred rituals were instituted to celebrate a fetish animal, the best known being the bear these caves. Periodically, the cave bear was hunted, killed, beheaded, and eaten during these ceremonies. Periodically, God, in this case the bear, was sacrificed so that man could derive power from him. This is the meaning of the Eucharist even today: the desire for deity, the will to acquire the power of God through communion.

Intimately linked to the psychic world of the unconscious, the death of the animal-god is ritualized in mythical acts in order to appease the anxieties linked to death. Among these mythical acts, the ritual meal (the Last Supper), where the flesh and blood of the totemic animal (Eucharist) are shared, allows *Homo erectus* to participate in the “divine” nature of the Bear, to channel the impulse of deadly aggressiveness towards life: they too had to die, but by sublimating the Bear-totem, they were associated with his life and by eating the flesh, by

drinking the blood of the deceased animal, the Bear mythical could thus be reborn, resuscitated in a new and immortal life by the eternal repetition of the ritual. The ritual becomes worship: “the conviction that new life only arises through sacrificial death.” (Eliade, *History of beliefs and religious ideas*, T-2, 1978, p. 327).

Studies on the subject of JG Frazer published in *The Golden Bough*, we show how humans have always felt sadness and even guilt every time they have to resort to animal killing or plants endowed with feelings and intelligence like men. We can understand that our ancestors could have feared the revenge of spirits torn from life and that only precise rituals adapted to an offended divinity could testify to the pain felt.

This fact, attested by paleontology, remains certain: the action of man on the remains of other humans.

“Various fragments of human skulls from the ancient Paleolithic era bear traces of violent actions: blows, cuts. They were also found scattered among animal bones treated in the same way. The explanations for this observation were numerous and based on abundant ethnographic comparisons where, often a “ritual cannibalism” was reported. (...) Perpetually, the examples encountered strike the same point with insistence: whether it is about recovered fossils, treatment of the dead or practices of the living, the animal world is intimately integrated, used, recovered in the mythical world of Paleolithic man, here in its immediate, direct and material form (the bones themselves), later in its intellectualized form of image and myth. (...) This observation is important to us: it touches the heart of the history of religions, the destiny of man, and shows that the primitive practice concerns its vestiges themselves before being abstracted into the symbolic (images, verbs, subsequent semantic transposition)” (nes, the host and the wine (body of Christ) as modern symbols of archaic ritual cannibalism). (M. Otte, *Prehistory of Religions*, p. 42-55)

“Withered bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will bring the spirit into you and you will live again ... I looked and here they were forming muscles and flesh”. (Vision of Ezekiel - 37; 1-8 sq.)

It is now proven that all human groups have shown a devotion to supernatural beings or entities. Even today, ancestor worship plays a primordial role throughout Africa and dominates religious life attested by the countless masks in the image of the dead that accompany many rituals such as births, initiations, weddings and funerals where ancestors deliver messages or warnings to family members. The ancestor is the acolyte of God and all the members of the clan know by heart from generation to generation the names of the ancestors based on the ties of blood which connects them to the First Father. Besides, what a surprise had the first missionaries ridiculed by an old African who told them : “How can whites believe in God, when they are unable to recite the genealogy which links them to him? “

Knowledge of hunting techniques leads *Homo erectus* to conquer new territories by following the migration of animals. By leaving his alma mater; Africa (ter-

restrial paradise), *Homo erectus* undertakes a long period of wandering (wandering of Gilgamesh, Adam and Eve) which will lead him towards a conquest, an immense expansion of his territory towards Asia as far as China, to Europe as far as Spain. Thanks to this prodigious expansion, the human species acquires a fabulous baggage of knowledge and adaptation to different environments, both climatic and food. This new knowledge dispersed in space corresponds to the foundations of current populations; the human species is divided into racial branches (anatomical modifications) and develops cultural specificities inherent in frequenting new territories. (foods, habitats, etc.). The sacred does not escape the diversification of spiritual concepts (collective totem) inherent in the creation of new clans: Mammoth clan, Mountain Lion clan, etc. (archaic basis of polytheism)

The acquisition of constantly renewed knowledge also requires the acquisition of a new and more refined code of transmission: language. The development of language will make a prodigious leap in the transmission of technical, socio-cultural and spiritual knowledge. It can be said that the development of language was for the archaic world what the invention of printing was for Christianity as a mode of transmission of the religious fact. The transition from rudimentary language to a more elaborate system will take over a million years. For the first time, man can say he has an (oral) history :

“Legends and myths are established, have repercussions, become more complex. They are added together and constitute, as with other practices, the fruit of tradition, the weight of the heritage closely linked to other cultural components such as social rules or technical practices. The period cannot therefore be considered globally as emerging but, as for the races which come from it, like a powerful process of long duration, of vast magnitude leading to the creation of the fundamental myths, of the most universal and deepest beliefs: evocation of life and death, distinction between man and nature, seasonal cycles of reproduction, binary sexual distinction (male-female), modes of action on matter. These fundamental mythical conceptions, at the meeting of the spirit which is elaborated and of the Universe, imbricated with the tradition, transported by thousands of generations in the course of the emergence of the conscience, were without doubt the principal axes on which will develop successive religious practices (...) ”. (Marcel Otte, *Prehistory of religions*, 1993)

Suddenly, the notion of interior versus exterior is actualized in the concept of the private versus the public, the concept of the family unit versus the social body, the concept of the self versus the self, of the conscious versus the unconscious (reality-dreams), of the personal totem versus the collective totem, concepts, for the moment nebulous, which will be realized in the Neanderthal era in the Middle Paleolithic.

With Neanderthal man appears a new conception of mobility in time and space which will distinguish him from *Homo erectus*: nomadism. Unlike the hunter-gatherer wandering of previous periods, the Neanderthal is now able to codify his physical space in relation to time (seasons). The nomad moves in the landscape, in nature in the same way that nature moves in him. There is osmosis and it is this same osmosis that modern ecology seeks to find.

Nomadism is closely linked to the appearance of language. Only the hominids could then say; “I remember my dad telling me there were wild berries out there while there is drought here. »Unlike wandering, nomadism is possible when the territory is codified, listed: winter is better in the south, summer, we can go up north like animals, it is the migratory way of life of mainly carnivorous Neanderthals. Through his movements, the Neanderthal creates, at random encounters with other related groups, a supply and exchange network. (start of trade) The quest for food, children, the protection of ancestors, mutual aid between related groups are essential traits for the survival of the community.

The development of techniques for making objects is becoming more and more refined and creates within the social body a new category of members: the craftsman who through his production work adequately meets the basic needs of the group by using local resources. Thus, the variety of tools available increases the capture of more diversified game and also brings a more varied diet without of course talking about gastronomy; whatever! The fact remains that the Neanderthal is increasingly pursuing the hold of man over nature.

Homes become better equipped and enclosed spaces respect the newly acquired privacy. This need for physical intimacy causes an equally essential need for deep intimacy with the spiritual world. This spiritualized intimacy initiates a process of individuation which requires to manifest itself concretely, to reveal itself. Thus emerges from consciousness the notion of the self. This spiritual emergence is as important to humanity as the discovery of fire in the fate of man had previously been. This emergence of the individuation of consciousness will have an equally spectacular consequence: the personal totem (the guardian angel). The individual therefore recognizes particular qualities that he will try to conceptualize in the forces, mainly animal, of nature. This entity (spirit) therefore has the function of protecting the individual against misfortune and acts as a mediator between him and the creator (collective Totem). The personal totem therefore marks the filiation between him and the creator. (Sons, daughters of God). In the Neanderthals, the personal totem (animal) must never surpass in power the animal of the collective Totem.

Among the Amerindians of Canada, each individual has his personal “manitou” which he chooses himself and to whom he pays particular prayers but always remains subordinate to the “Grand Manitou”. Even if man symbolically takes hold of the animal as a personal totem, we must not forget that there is reciprocity in the exchange and that the animal takes hold of the individual’s “soul” from him.

“The greatest danger to life,” said an Eskimo from Iglood, “is that human food is entirely made up of souls. All the animals that we kill and eat have souls that do not perish with the body and that must be appeased so that they do not take revenge for what we have taken their bodies ” (Schreiber, 1980).

The personal totem therefore introduces the spiritual concept of the soul into the natural order and the notion of guilt into the act of killing. The cult of the bear, for example as a powerful collective Totem, origin of the notion of God, has never prevented the archaic hunter from killing him and eating his body on con-

dition that the soul is appeased. Thus is revealed the archaic intuition of anguish in the guilty experience of transgression which risks unleashing vengeful anger. Guilt introduces disorder, where harmony reigned. It is in this sense that we must analyze the ritual of sacrifice which appears on the horizon of the Time of the origins. Man, as a conscious acting subject, is responsible for a disorder which requires redress.

Aside : This conception of guilt corresponds to the biblical interpretation of the fall of Adam as author of original sin, man thus brings discord within a good creation. We will also see appear in our analysis the Gnostic concept of evil prior to man and identified with the creation of the world itself and finally, man who suffers evil in the grip of a fatal, tragic destiny.

The spiritual world of the Neanderthal is therefore populated with a multitude of totemic animals forming an immense mandala having as its central point the unifying totem of the clan. This archaic attempt at the ego, the first act of freedom personalized by the totem, attempts to maintain the balance between nature and man, the latter monopolizing the natural forces in his spirituality while he returns his soul to nature.

“Suddenly”, the Neanderthal begins to bring back to the camp, more precisely inside his private space, objects without any utilitarian relation to his physical survival. Non-food, non-technical, these objects seem to have been invested with a sacred or magical function. These are natural pearls, ivory, crystalline rocks, fossils, animal bones; ironically, paraphrasing Descartes, we can say that this is the period of “I collect therefore I am.” “This collection of objects” therefore makes an image. » (Leroi-Gourhan, *The religions of prehistory*, 1976)

For the first time, the archetypes are visualized by and in the object, they are therefore also “natural mythical images.”

These first “natural images”, the creative act of which is the collection and appropriation by the collection, are the starting point, the emergence of the amazing adventure of spiritualized natural forms (object worship, idolatry) which will evolve. towards the manufactured object image is the birth of art which for centuries will be assimilated to spiritual expression. One of the first characteristics of these manufactured objects (sculpture, amulets, jewelry) and of its pictorial counterpart: cave painting, will be the use of red ocher as materials or dyes, the color of blood. (red earth, blood tie, red skin)

But between “natural image” and “manufactured image” lies a period of several thousand years to which we must return to understand the importance of this practice of collecting. First, the “natural images” will serve to identify the individual with respect to his totem; a sort of object, a sign of recognition. Much later, some collected items will be part of a symbolic exchange process (jewelry) to emphasize friendship or a feeling (love). Symbolic exchange process at the origin of a commercial exchange system based on barter, that is, an exchange of goods without the intermediary of money.

The personal totem greatly modifies the funeral practices marked mainly by the passage from the collective grave in open area (exterior) to the individual grave dug in the ground (interior). Man needs intimacy in his relationship with his totem, a phenomenon linked to the development of consciousness, of the self. It is therefore “logical” that the personal objects of the deceased are found in the individual tomb mixed with the bones of the fetish animal. Another constant attested, this return (cycle) to the earth, to the original matrix is ??accentuated by the flexed position of the body like a fetus ready to be reborn: the body is no longer mortal but indeed immortal; the body also becomes sacred, the first act of hominization of the divine (God made man) . Man longs for the divine, for the deity.

This symbolic exchange will have repercussions on the social corpus and on the initiation rites. Threatened by this act of individual freedom (anarchy) , the clan reacts by designating a manager (shaman) of the cosmic forces who will assert his power by controlling the initiation rites while the leader seized the most powerful totem. This system (totemic theocracy) will find its apogee in Mesopotamia and in Pharaonic Egypt, overthrown by Christianity by the democratization of the divine fact, the anthropocentrism of the man-god.

We know that the Australopithecus has long since undertaken a migration which led it to inhabit a territory of phenomenal dimensions and varied climatic conditions. The variety of flora and fauna brings its corollary: the variety of collective and individual totems, the food variety, the architectural variety of habitats, the variety of customs, the variety of rites which are gradually beginning to acquire religious codes. , in short, culture.

Evolution continuing its adaptation work will induce specific genetic mutations depending, among other things, on the environment, more specifically, on climatic conditions. Let us remember, the more life evolves, the more the living becomes diversified. It will be the same for the territory. We will speak of territoriality, of cultural territory linked to a specific group: Caucasian linked to the particular conditions of south-eastern Russia, Negroid south of the Sahara in Africa and Mongoloid in the steppes of Central Asia; Native Americans are related to the Mongoloid group at the beginning and will develop more and more specific characters. A whole panoply of totemic emblems, designs and bodily marks served for social identification as much of the members in particular as of the clan.

In general, tattooing, scarifications and other bodily modifications corresponded to the animist magico-religious thought accompanying the initiation rites and other commemorative ceremonies then, then, determined the social condition of the individual (chief, warrior, slave) and finally, this bodily aesthetics suggested a range of emotions ranging from sensuality to eroticism. The body marks are planetary and attested since the Neolithic period among the Celts, Eskimos, Egyptians, Japanese, Polynesians, Berbers, Bedouins, Arabs, Africans, Amerindians; rare are the peoples which are not marked.

The distinctive marks of a biological nature added to the cultural and psychological peculiarities which result from them form the races and the ethnic

groups. Faced with this exponential demographic growth, the need quickly appeared to control these human beings and to regularize the dynamics and practices of community life. All kinds of collective constructions of individuals, clans, professions, classes, races and nations were thus formed, exponentially increasing the repertoire of distinctive signs.

The impurity of the woman polluted by menstrual blood will succeed “the smell, the color, the texture of the skin, the shape of the face, the tangling of the hair” like so many stains, tangible signs of suspicion for the unacknowledged goal. domination of one group by discriminating against the other and that should be kept in an inferior position . (Moscovici, *Domestic Men and Wild Men*, 1974)

Man appears to man as belonging to another animal species, dangerous that we must expel from the territory. Metamorphosis of the natural aggressiveness of protecting the territory for food purposes (innate) into a more complex psychic conception (acquired) of protection of cultural territory, of defense of racial identity between members of the same species but of different cultures . This emergence of culture into human consciousness marks the end of “pure nature” man and the beginnings of man / culture.

Driven from paradise, man will be punished for his “sin” by dividing the unity of men into threatening species to the point of committing the irreparable : the murder of his brother. Modern man has just been born, his name is Homo sapiens, the “wise” man and the Neanderthals will be the first victims. This struggle between brothers of the same species is the birth of war.

Some philosophers have advanced the hypothesis that war as a ritual is the only and true religion of man because it is created (a cultural heritage) contrary to aggressiveness (innate). If the instinctive aggressiveness of the hunter saved archaic human life, war has all the potential to destroy it. In fact, man is solely responsible for it and cannot find its legitimacy in the laws of nature. To take up Freud’s idea, “man is the being in which nature comes into conflict with itself” and it is up to us to add that war marks the collapse of his freedom in anguish because before From now on, the abyss of a hostile universe opens up to him.

By destroying his own life and that of others, the guilty man experiences the full panoply of psychic despair, physical destruction and psychological wickedness. To this end, it will be up to the shaman, the mandate to elucidate the scandal of misfortune and thwart its harmfulness.

The archaic hunter, like a tadpole becomes a frog, acquires, assimilates, discovers the requirements of his new condition of warrior; the techniques of manufacturing new objects will make a prodigious leap for humanity. This period of the Upper Paleolithic is the most brilliant, richest and most complex evolutionary period of Prehistory seen from the angle of the human development of consciousness and of society. A real boost. Armatures, handles, levers come to furnish the hardware of domestic tools. Decorative objects other than “religious” appear. The space is structured, base camp, seasonal camp, the habitat is better

organized, delimited by walls. Hunting specializes: big game hunters (mammoths, rhinoceroses), herd animal hunters (horses, reindeer); each specialty with its own techniques, weapons and rituals.

This manual ability, now well suited to crafting objects, is making a major conceptual leap. This is how, at the level of the sacred, the “images made” by human hands appear: sculpture. Once again the archetypes are visualized by the mythical image, but this time it is artificial, created by man, it is the birth of art.

“A conceptual leap is thus accomplished: from the selected image (for example a fossil) to that manufactured by man, thus incorporating, in a fixed form, their value and their meaning. Mastered by the human will, these symbolic expressions replace the natural one, extending the human hold, analogous to that of a Creator. Control of nature by the mind, the image offers man an extension of his power ”. (M. Otte, *Prehistory of Religions* , p. 63)

In fact everything changes in meaning when art is introduced into the technique of object making. Shells and stones embedded in the chiseled wood of knife handles appear; to the utilitarian object, the Australopithecus thinks of making it pleasing to the eye.

The function of art then is to reveal man to himself. It is through the mediation of the created object that humans will learn to know themselves; at that time art was mainly educational:

“Let us not doubt it: everything that man adds as needed without any additional satisfaction, what is called art, has only one motive: to manifest to himself that he does not is not that a living; that he is not only a being who eats, who drinks, who sleeps, who fights, who moves but a spiritual subject who knows so well how to rise above the demands of the organism ... “ (Gobry, *The Meaning of Beauty*, 2003, p.25)

Let’s continue the great saga of sculpted images. A procession of terrifying animals, carved in ivory, sets in motion to accompany the deceased to the afterlife. The body has become sacred, as we have seen, and the use of red ocher as an agent for preserving food, makes its appearance in funeral rites through embalming, a technique which will find its apogee, several millennia more later, with the advanced techniques of mummifications developed in Egypt, thus reinforcing the concept of immortality of the body.

The first fabricated image of the man (Stradel site, central Europe) shows him in feline disguise (simulacrum). Primordial image of the man who conquers the deified beast. The second largest human representations represent abstract sexual patterns (penis-vulva).

In the Neolithic, sacred art took an equally revolutionary turn: man began to sanctify his own image.

“They (the overmodeled skulls of the Neolithic) carry the restorations of flesh and hair by plaster and clay, the gaze being represented by shells encrusted in

the eye sockets. (...) The sacred image is borrowed from the human register based on its own anatomical remains and transformed into a “work of art” by the addition of materials. » (Otte, Prehistory of Religions, p.84)

If the essence of Christianity is the Incarnation of God in man, one can think in reverse that the Neolithic religion is that of the Incarnation of man in God. It is now proven that all human groups have shown a devotion to supernatural beings or entities. Even today, ancestor worship plays a primordial role throughout Africa and dominates religious life attested by the countless masks in the image of the dead that accompany many rituals such as births, initiations, weddings and funerals where ancestors deliver messages or warnings to family members. The ancestor is the acolyte of God and all the members of the clan know by heart from generation to generation the names of the ancestors based on the ties of blood which connects them to the First Father.

Since this sacred art was associated with the cult of ancestors, we can imagine that it was a reconstruction of the deceased. For the first time, man seeks to recreate an entity by his sole address or skill in the “learned” manipulation of his own anatomical remains. Man begins to taste the joys of demiurgic creation.

In the south of France and in Spain, the manufactured image undergoes a profound irreversible change: from the three-dimensional statuette, we move on to the two-dimensionality of the relief on a fixed wall; the “flat image”, the drawing (painting, hieroglyphic writing) was born. Since the surface (the wall) allows it, we are witnessing the appearance of “monumental” art which will be reserved as it should be for the representation of the notion of a superior being in gigantic animals, art and sacred form a whole. Many hybrid creatures, vaguely human silhouettes decorated with animal attributes (disguise of the hunter and the shaman) appear there as a sort of figurative staging of the incarnation. The shamanist operation will reveal to man his spiritual essence by making him aware of his demiurgic capacity. While the group is completely focused on the external object, the shaman reflects back the image of interiority like a mirror.

Art and religion therefore have a public and community vocation which unites the clan and the cave, with its immense walls, (an intimate space conducive to contemplation, to mystery) will become the chosen place, the temple.

The cave, this archaic temple will be invested by the animus and will be used strictly for the representation, for the masculine conception of the Universe and for the celebration of the rituals attached to it such as the initiation of adolescents to hunting, as a passage from the protective feminine world to the adventurous masculine world of the hunt where the adolescent turned man acquires his first weapon, a sign of power. It will be the place of predilection for ritual dances and shamanistic ecstasies. According to Leroi-Gourhan, it is about the diffusion by contact of the same ideological system, in particular that which marks the “religion of the caves”. (The religions of prehistory, p. 84). The ideology and the “religion” of the patriarchy have found their “church”, their “mosque”, their “synagogue”.

“But two recurring themes run through this (parietal) art, (...) one is the power

and the grace of the animals that these peoples trapped or hunted: the bison, the hairy mammoth, the deer, the horse, the ibex; the other is the wonder and the mystery of sexuality, centered on the genitals of the woman, (...) offering us a wide distribution of images of female nudes, with the interest centered on the vulva, the breasts, the buttocks, all this enlarged, inflated, in many figures ... “ (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine* TI, 1973, p.163)

Everything becomes clear when we know that the representation of animals symbolizes the desire for possession of the animal during a successful hunt. Ditto for the vulvae and the breasts, the hunter wishes to possess them in the same way as the animals, to draw from them the power of their mysterious force of attraction. All the more obvious, as often, the genitals and the animals are part of the same pictorial scene.

“Here we find ourselves confronted with the contradiction of an intensely masculine society, whose major occupations excluded women except in their secondary capacities of butcher, cook and tanner of skins, and which none the less raised functions and aptitudes peculiar to women, their faculties of sexual pleasure, of reproduction and of raising children to a point where sexuality took hold of the imagination as never before. “ (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine* , TI, 1973, p. 164)

Between 30 and 20 thousand years, a variety of materials are added, including, for the first time in human history, terracotta. Suddenly, a fundamental shift in the images takes place: the woman becomes the dominant figure. Wide hips, enormous breasts, well marked vulva, the “woman-nature” of Prehistory represents the woman-genitor and her image will never disappear from the universal iconography. It is of all races, all religions, all civilizations and testifies to its mythical importance in all forms of spirituality from prehistory to the present day. (She will be permanently desecrated by pornography.)



Several statuettes in fact idealize maternal curves: the cult of the mother-father is very widespread and well established by sacred statuettes ... at home, at home. On the other hand, several others with voluminous breasts, vulva, hips and prominent buttocks represent, in many ways, the dark background of the

sexual world and mark the man's obsession for feminine attributes to the point of distorting them enormously. . This deformity of the breasts and the vulva is all the more noticed as the facial features are absent from prehistoric Venus. Whether they are the Venus of Willendorf, the Venus of Lespugue, the Venus of Laussel and finally the Venus of Montpazier with the particularly developed vulva, we notice that the "face is a uniform surface, without eyes, without mouth and without ears"; all the gaze is centered on the genitals and nothing else.

"The Paleolithic characters of the human image are found in the other prehistoric arts of the planet and help us better understand the nature of the duplication of the human being that constitutes the human image. Human sexuality occupies an essential place in the birth of artistic creativity. The graphic or plastic female representation is treated differently from the male representation. (...) A particularity linked to the previous one is the frequent absence of head (face), arms and feet in female representations, sculpted or engraved, and that at all times of the Upper Paleolithic ". (Jean-Pierre Mohen, Arts and Prehistory, 2002, p.186)

Culture definitely marks the break with circular time, the cyclical seasons. The work of art becomes a witness of linear time, the content of the work frozen in time "imposes the idea of the present different from the past, its promises turn it towards the future. More and more man grasps himself different from the natural model. The work of art shrouded in mystery becomes an object of envy, possession, power, and therefore conflict: man / culture versus woman / nature.

The natural world becomes organized and classified into ecological niches: the land of the pastures of wild bovinds, the place of mild weather, the fish river etc. and above all, all this information is transmitted from generation to generation. The territory conceals immense resources of life, so much that the hunter will seek to protect them as he also protects his own blood. Earth and man thus develop a symbolic relationship of consanguinity reinforcing the notion of territoriality.

The so-called matriarchal "anima" civilizations developed especially in the Upper Paleolithic and were located in Southeast Asia. Later in Southeast Asia, horticulture developed. This type of matriarchal civilization based on a combination of hunting, planting and horticulture subsequently spread to tropical Africa, Melanesia, India and the two Americas.

This remoteness from Europe and the Middle East has enabled them to grow in security. However, as Drewermann explains in *The Murderous Progress* , no so-called natural or matriarchal society has been able to resist the shock of their



discovery and / or their colonization by the Western world. On the other hand, this search for harmony, associated with the anima, also constitutes a sum of cosmological, religious, social and ethical models belonging not to a bygone past but to a perpetual updating. The question is therefore to know: How far can the values ?? of the animus or the patriarchy grow to the detriment of the anima?

It is therefore major upheavals that are announced at the level of spirituality and artistic expression. Human images are multiplying. In fact, we are witnessing a real transformation of the sacred where superhuman forces take the form of man. The individual now tends to control his destiny through representations of his own image. All nature, wild and mystical, is commensurate with, within reach of its action; man is free. Mesolithic man is resolutely committed to transforming the world. The earth, feminine, maternal symbol, falls into the masculine camp; the sacred statuettes of the female genitor have a new competitor who further weakens the symbolism of mother earth: the male statuette makes its appearance and will be the object of a new ritual: the ceremony of sacralization (mass) of its own image . Man thus fully assumes his driving role in the unfolding and transformation of the mystical world and of nature.

If the Gods take the symbolic image of man, what happens to woman? The discovery of cereal cultivation (grasses) and vegetarian culture (tubers) brought with it a tremendous upheaval in spiritual values. A new sacred myth takes shape which expresses the intrinsic relationship between woman / nature and vegetation resulting from a primitive, almost innate act, performed by women for ages: the burial of the placenta (original waters) which becomes a rite. of fertility of Mother Earth. By this gesture, the woman replaces the divinity by possessing a sacred biological power which gives birth to plants, the tubers buried in the ground. The meaning of the myth is obvious: food plants are sacred since they come from the body of the deified woman. While nourishing himself, man eats a divine substance. As we can see, this new rite is juxtaposed with the "old", that of the marrow of the bones and the skull associated with the Paleolithic hunter. We can speak here of a deep "existential" crisis.

"Woman and feminine sacredness are promoted to the forefront. Since women have played a decisive role in the domestication of plants, they become the owners of cultivated fields, which enhances their social position and creates characteristic institutions, such as, for example, matrilocution, the husband

being obliged to live in the house. of his wife. The fertility of the earth is linked to female fertility; therefore women become responsible for the abundance of the crops, for they know the “mystery” of creation. It is a religious mystery, because it governs the origin of life, food and death. (...) Of course, feminine and maternal sacredness was not ignored in the Paleolithic, but the discovery of agriculture significantly increased its power. The sacredness of sexuality, in the first place of feminine sexuality, merges with the miraculous riddle of creation. (...) A complex symbolism, with an anthropo-cosmic structure, associates woman and sexuality with lunar rhythms, with the Earth (assimilated to the matrix) and with what we must call the “mystery” of vegetation. A mystery which calls for the “death” of the seed in order to assure it a new birth, all the more marvelous in that it results in an astonishing multiplication. The assimilation of human existence to vegetative life is expressed through images and metaphors borrowed from the plant drama (life as the flower of the fields, etc.). This imagery has fueled poetry and philosophical reflection for millennia, and it still remains “true” for contemporary man. » (M. Eliade, History of religious beliefs and ideas, TI, 1976, p.51-52)

The female statuary becomes, by this very fact, more faithful to its image but remains always associated with motherhood, with nature. But curiously, it is at this time that the statuette woman / snake appears where the latter is embedded in the female face. This association is quite “logical” when we know that cultivated fields serve as ecological niches for several varieties of snakes which feed on small rodents and reproduce there. In all civilizations, the snake is a mythical ancestor founder of societies because it is associated with female fertility. (Hence the Christian symbolism of the serpent which reveals to women the knowledge of origins and sexuality. (Tree / penis, apple / vulva = plant / life).

The observation of agrarian rhythms, vegetation and seasons induces a strengthening of the Paleolithic understanding of cosmic rhythms: the perpetual renewal of the world through the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, this time represented by the ouroboros: the snake which bites its tail, circular image which represents the union of the terrestrial female divinities with the celestial male gods represented by the circle. Gods and Goddesses complement each other in the great Circle of cosmic harmony. (Christian iconography has taken this symbolic image and applied it to the two fish (ouroboros) biting their tails, the fish being the symbol of Christ).

Google-image / ouroboros serpent
Google-image ouroboros fish



To counterbalance these agrarian forces, nomadic pastoralists will build their own primarily power-oriented symbols by adopting the wild bull as their spiritual emblem. (Not to be confused with the domesticated beef, an agrarian symbol). For them, it is the abundant seed of the bull that fertilizes the earth. The bull is indeed a primordial animal, which one finds in the art of the Paleolithic caves, associated with the creative force. Among the farmers, the powerful matriarchal image will be superseded much later by the appearance of the plow, the phallic symbol of the male who sows the earth.

Equally revealing change at the level of sacred space, we go from shadow to light; from cave to temple. In fact, it was in the ancient European Neolithic that an area with specialized functions appeared well delimited in the space of the village. This temple confirms that religious authority is now present and that it is part of a convergence of power and the sacred. We are at the start of the city. The animist beliefs of the hunters fade to make way for new religions. The liturgical masks, mainly in the heads of birds, give importance to the eyes, passage of the gaze, intelligence and mystical force. Statuettes and masks are grouped together on a sort of altar at the back of the Temple. Another effect on the sacred is the appearance of priestly functions reserved for a male elite (priesthood) who will henceforth take care of reflecting on the destinies of the community. And a fact attested by recent archaeological discoveries, the woman, despite her strength acquired in the symbolism of the agrarian world, is still absent from the general iconography of the “European” temple. (Eliade, TI, 1976). This is not the case in India, Asia, Africa and pre-Columbian America.

But it is therefore important to note that it is the appropriation of the sacred domain by the brotherhood of priests and shamans independently of a male or female god that determines the ideology of social and political power and propagates it from generation to generation. So much so that a so-called matriarchal society which venerates the Great Goddess nevertheless conveys the masculine ideology of social relations because men have appropriated the manifestation of the myth through celebration, the control of rituals. We can see that it is the religious institution controlled by the man that has propagated the inequalities between men and women throughout the social and political fabric. What Montaigne describes as “the gross imposture of religions.”

Hunted, the expression of the anima will find refuge in the domestic space (queen of the hearth) in a place fitted out (decoration) for this purpose and the statuette (doll) will be its mode of representation.

“They (statuettes) come from the levels of habitation, therefore seem to be

related to domestic religion.” (...) It is Leroi-Gourhan’s merit for having highlighted the central function of the male / female polarity in Paleolithic art, that is to say cave paintings and reliefs / statuettes and plaque Stone. » (Eliade, TI, p. 31)

The adored body

Now that the universal myths are well anchored in the mind, we will witness a veritable explosion of gods, goddesses, a flowering of signs (zodiacs, tarot) all coming from the cultural diversity of human groups. “The human remains, the image varies. All these substitute images are reducible to archetypes of the collective unconscious and change, like the chameleon, according to the habits and customs of evolving civilizations. They are symbols of identification of man in the making.

“Structured by archetypes, ancestral and unconscious images that appear everywhere and at all times, innate and immutable forms, the collective unconscious is expressed through myths, works of art, religious beliefs, a whole rich set in symbolic creations. » (Jacqueline Russ, *The March of Contemporary Ideas*, 1994, p.103)

In India, the sacrificial ceremonies conducted by the Vedic priests, the Brahmins are experienced as repetitions of the creation where the first man, Purusha made a sacrifice of his person by dismembering his own body. The whole universe is in the form of a human body, conversely, the human body is a universe with five levels of manifestations : the bliss body, the light body, the mental body, the energy body and the body. physical. The body is therefore a reservoir of primordial energy which allows access to the divine.

Helped by Soma, god of the hallucinogenic fermented drink, the Brahmin turns into a Vedic poet reciting sacred utterances and esoteric mantras accompanied by tremors, shamanistic trances felt as an emanation of cosmic forces supporting the whole Universe. This interiority, which confirms the body as a receptacle, as a temple, manifests itself in the Indian Upanisads through the soul as the focus of the inner light where all reality, all consciousness and all identities are deployed by the force of life (prana).

It will be up to the Taoist teachings of ancient China to build the bridge between the bodily exoteric expressions of archaic traditions and the esoteric universe of the Indian soul. In all the Eastern schools, wisdom is innate in man but it must be developed as much in the body as in the spirit. “Our bodily way of being in the world expresses our way of thinking about the world. “ (Yasuo Yuasa) While the Vedic and Buddhist thinkers put out the relationship body / soul-cosmos / mind, philosophers Arab undertook them to establish connections between the body and nature.

“The body is like the earth, its bones are mountains, its marrow mines, the abdomen is like the sea, the intestines like rivers, the veins are rivers, the flesh is like dust and mud. The hair on the body is like plants, the places where it grows are like fertile soil, and those where nothing grows like saline soil. From its face to its feet, the body is a populated city, its back is the deserted region, the front is east, its back west, its right south and its left north. His breath is like the wind, his words are thunder, his cries are lightning. His laughter is like the wind. noon’s light, her weeping like rain, her sorrow is like the darkness of night, and her sleep like death, just as her vigilance is like life. The days of her childhood are spring, (follows) summer maturity is autumn, and old age is like winter. His movements and actions are like the movements of stars and their rotations. Its birth and presence are like incipient constellations, and its death and absence are like their setting “. (SH Nasr, *Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, 1948, p.101-102)



This pre-Islamic Arab vision of the body / nature complements that of the Hindu yogis where the vital energy is diffused via energy centers or shakras, distributed over the entire body and which are linked to various cosmic powers. It is through the vital energy radiating from his body that man becomes aware of Universal Life. To deny it is also to deny the spirit and the soul that inhabit earthly nature. We therefore live in a fabric of theophanies, signs and information that the mind analyzes, man in this sense is a *pontifex* , a builder of a bridge between inner and outer reality.

The stars and the stars are also part of the familiar universe of man. Unable to physically reach the cosmos, man symbolically projects himself there to expand the territory of his kingdom. The sky is populated with human and animal appearances. The star constellations become signs of the zodiac with its bestiary of bull, ram, fish, lion, scorpion and weave a network of correspondences with the human body divided into twelve parts linked to astrological signs. Every limb and organ finds its counterpart in the heavens. Thus the ram rules the head and the face of man, bull, the neck, the throat ; Gemini, shoulders, arms, hands ; Cancer, chest, ribs and lungs ; Leo, stomach, heart, and back ; Virgo, belly and bowels ; Libra, the lower abdomen under the hips, groins, navel ; Scorpio, sexual organs, bladder, uterus ; Sagittarius, thighs ; Capricorn, knees ; Aquarius, the legs to the heels and finally, Pisces, the feet. (Françoise Loux, *The body in*

traditional society, p.48)

Respect for the body and its organs was deeply rooted in traditional societies. A whole ritual of life was taking place around him. The movement of the stars, the position of the planets mainly the influence of the moon, punctuate medicinal interventions and ancient therapies. The cosmos even penetrates the most intimate part of the female body, the influence of the planets on gestation as fol-

lows : “During the first month, Saturn dominates the conception of the embryo. Jupiter takes its place in the second, makes flesh and limbs. In the third month, Mars with its heat, separates the limbs from each other and arranges the head, arms and legs. The dominant Sun in the fourth month creates the heart and gives movement to the sensitive soul. In the fifth month, Venus forms the ears, nose, penis and testes in males, breasts and vulva in females, strengthens bones and vertebrae, and forms the fingers and toes. During the sixth month, under the influence of Mercury, the organs of voice and sight are formed, hair and nails begin to grow. In seven, the moon fills all the voids of the flesh with water, giving it the nourishment it needs. In the eighth month and ninth month, return in the order of Saturn which cools and Jupiter which warms alternately the fetus to better acclimatize it to its new life. (Françoise Loux, *The body in traditional society*, p.51)

Among the Egyptians, the terrestrial human microcosm joins the cosmic Man by the resurrection of the body and the soul. Already with the notion of soul, an interiority of the body emerges which contrasts with the external vision of the skin (tattoo) and of the gesture (dance) as cosmic communion.

At the end of the Neolithic, everything is now in place: nature is more and more submissive, the cult of the dead and fertility are well established, the agrarian Gods and Goddesses rub shoulders with the deified icons of the Paleolithic hunter and the nomadic pastor, beliefs and rituals are celebrated at the Temple decorated by male artists under the supervision of male “priests” with a cosmology featuring the symbol of the village as “Center of the World” defended by seasoned warriors. (Eliade, *TI*, 1976).

From the Paleolithic to the Neolithic, (still today!) The desire to be able is essential as our first value. The power over the animals that we eat, over the plants that we cultivate, the power of man over his companion and of his society over the other, the foreigner. All human development is based on this desire to be more symbolized by the power of the gods from whom we want to acquire power. By allaying the fear of the gods through ritual, man hopes to receive something in return, some kind of extra power. But the association between power and divinity is fraught with consequences, it implies the priority of force and the power to dominate over everything. The revolution will come from Christianity and its apology for love as a utopia never realized.

But for now, the raw, unadorned history shows us that the fate of mankind is indebted, not to love, not to justice, not to equality, but to power as a condition of life. ‘being and his desire to dominate. Because let us not forget that the first concern of men has always been to obtain what they want with or without the help of God.

In short, all the religions, all the esoteric sects updated their fundamental archetypes either by the search for natural harmony for religions and spirits of the matriarchal type or by the search for power for religions and spirits of the patriarchal type. European *Homo sapiens* chose his camp for him: to increasingly appropriate the forces of nature and to increase his power over others, his wife first and over foreigners, including through barbarism if necessary.

Antiquity.

Subjected body.

A new society is being established with its codes structuring spirituality, community life and its protection. Because, three ways of life then clash: the hunting peoples who migrate with the animals for whom the land belongs to everyone, the nomadic pastoralists who graze their herds on vast lands with relatively open borders and finally the farming peoples. sedentary people who openly display a landowner attitude.

Shepherds and farmers become producers of their food resources and will each have territories and villages protected by the tribe and their ethnic groups. An interminable chain of misunderstandings between them will emerge despite an important barter trade and degenerate into almost fratricidal wars.

“For the peasant, it was essential to clearly mark his property rights on the land. (...) For the nomad, on the other hand, this act of taking possession represented an illegitimate appropriation, a theft; in his idea, it should not have any limit or fences; all his assets were mobile and, in the form of herds, linked only indirectly to specific grazing areas; in addition, he was obliged to note that the lands that the peasant disputed with him were precisely the most fertile, so he saw nothing but justice in getting their hands on, in ceaselessly renewed raids, on having won so well from the sedentary peasants of the first village and urban civilizations. Conversely, the inhabitants of the cities could consider the nomads as vagrants, lazy, violent greedy for plunder from which it was necessary to be guarded like wild animals. “ (Drewermann *Spiral of Fear*, p. 46-47)

Here then is a good summary of the biblical “legendary” conflict between Adam, the sedentary farmer and Abel, the nomadic shepherd. This is also why in many other mythologies, women farmers will be associated with the goddesses of war. Of course, factors such as the demographic expansion of peasants who are better nourished than their sometimes starving nomadic neighbors, floods and insect invasions will increase the sources of conflict. More and more frequent, these tribal wars will command the more and more necessary use of men trained and dedicated exclusively to combat: the army. The army prolongs, gives a second breath to the life of the Paleolithic hunter. From this date, war becomes a “normal” phenomenon.

Moreover, it is there, at this precise moment, that the philosopher Kant situates the appearance of evil. This progress of the species breaks the determining instinctive links and causes the exit of man from the natural order (paradise) and is the basis of the now famous opposition between nature and culture, between good and evil. Kant concludes from this in *Conjectures on the beginning of human history* that “the history of nature begins with good because it is the work of God; the history of freedom begins with evil, for it is the work of man. Man loses his first innocence by awakening reason that Kant associates with the biblical fall. Subsequently, man’s evil inclination for vice and its attendant evils appeared. This evil inclination, Kant called it “radical evil”. This concept only applies to human reality because Spinoza will establish subsequently that nothing is bad in nature because all things are in conformity with what they are and

that the perfection or the imperfection of things, beings are strictly human modalities of comparison which do not refer to any reality other than that of their imagination of an ideal model.

Finally, the appearance of agriculture on the one hand and of the city on the other, will mark the beginning of the end of the nomadic era of the hunter and the notion of protected hunting territory will slowly evolve towards the agrarian concept. of “ethnicities-cities-countries-nations. “

The transition from agricultural society to more structured peasant society marks the appearance of chiefdoms, a model of societies run by a chief surrounded by dignitaries, priests and clan chiefs. We think of the Celts, Germans, Iberians, Italics, Thracians, Dacians, Scythians and many other Nordic peoples. These companies with chiefdoms establish new commercial relations, they acquire, mainly by barter, ore which they transform into luxurious or useful objects. Several mine shafts are opened to extract flint, copper and other metals. Nothing before that could haunt the social imagination like the extraction of gold. Suddenly all spiritual concepts slide towards materialism, the possession of the “object / desire”.

With the appearance of gold, art takes a decisive turn; to spiritual representation are added the marks of material prestige and social domination. The accumulation of these objects introduces new concepts like wealth and treasure. These new marks of social status are signaled by the creation of scepters and crowns as precious or exotic objects. These changes bring to the embryonic state the first forms of social inequalities based on the possession of treasure. But above all, the making of “gold money is a symbol of perversion and impure exaltation of desires. “ (Dies) Some families become more important than others, alliances are trading and the exchange of women between families come seal the negotiations. The transmission of power and wealth from father to son transformed the chiefdom into a dynasty. Prehistory turns into history.

This real socio-historical break is accompanied by the phenomenal development of metallurgical techniques. The concerted action of the lumberjack, the blacksmith and the miner will also have a most tragic impact with the creation of new and ever more powerful weapons and this improvement of the weapons of war will be constant until today. New weapons appear like the sword and are added to the already existing daggers, daggers and axes. Stimulated by these new possibilities, certain hunter-warriors, forming wild nomadic hordes, quickly understand the profit they can draw from them because indeed there is a “magical” way to obtain food without toil: theft; an easy way to get a desirable wife: rape at the tip of a knife; a simple way to gain power : conquest; a clever way to avoid work considered as slavery and ultimately to obtain wealth : looting. Yes, man also discovers himself as a barbarian.

Thus the idea that mythologies cover the fear of men in front of natural phenomena will be gradually replaced by anthropomorphic mythologies and gods covering the fear of men towards man himself. Thus to weld the harmony of a group and prevent internal conflict, violence towards the other, the foreigner will serve as an outlet. Once the enemy has been designated, it will be almost

impossible to turn back even if the reasons for the hatred appear unfounded and even false. The essayist René Girard will call this phenomenon “founding violence” which will strongly contaminate the entire sacred universe.

This “foundational violence” is based on the notion of sacrifice. The appearance of castes during the history of India has developed in order to strengthen the system of coercion necessary for the proper development of Indian society. Vedic myths relate that the human race originated from a giant divine Being in human form, Purusha . From his mouth came the Brahmins from whom the priests come, from his arms the Kshatriya who supply the rulers and warriors, from his thighs the Vaishya or economic agents, traders and merchants, and from his feet the Sudra or artisans, at service of the first three castes. The enslavement of some by others is a human weakness placed under the sign of heredity, not a natural law. The Untouchables, those who exercise dirty or painful jobs such as garbage collectors and coolies, refer to themselves as Dalits (oppressed) and are still the object of persecution and ill-treatment.

The Untouchables being out of castes, it seems logical that non-Hindus are also considered as Untouchables. This is the case with tribal populations in remote areas of the country. This is also the case with religious minorities. Hinduism has kept the essence of the Vedic religion: the continuity and prosperity of the world are based on sacrifice, the main victim of which is man. A whole hierarchy is therefore set up under the influence of the notion of pure versus impure.

The pure and the impure each crystallize in the person of the Brahmin, opposed to those of the lower castes, who are appointed to take charge of social impurities. Each, at his level, is defined in relations of superiority and inferiority in relation to others. The caste spirit simply reflects that social inequalities conform to natural laws perceptible in their time when no equality between species exists.

This notion of purity reflects well the structures of Aryan India. Society is highly hierarchical under the aegis of the Aryas, a caste of warrior lords whose power is codified by the Vedic religion, a political instrument of cohesion of which the priests are the guardians. Previously, the archaic being was bathed in religion, his life was religion in the sense of re-ligare , completely connected to his world, participating in *mana* , this “magical” force, “principle of all that lives, of all that which acts, of all that moves. » (Durkheim, Émile, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, 1960, p.276)

With the first Vedic writings arises the idea that the individual is indebted to the social whole in which he lives. To this is added a panoply of gods who will come to govern the smallest details of daily life, establishing dress codes, food rites, laws and rules of conduct. Religion becomes an institution or, as Henri Hubert put it so well : “religion is the administration of the sacred” and we add, for the purposes of socio-political cohesion. Religion becomes an ideology of the sacred.

From now on, there will be no politics without religion, hence the importance of the god of war Indra who leads the warriors in combat and who celebrates his

victories with memorable feasts and drunkenness. From conquest to conquest, over time, princely dynasties emerged as the Aryan rājā who rule a people of farmers and breeders who love to sing, feast and dance to the sounds of the harp and the lute.

Continuing their policy of conquest, more than four millennia ago, these hordes of warriors from southern India invaded the Caucasus and settled in the verdant plains of Iran, on the shores of the Black Sea and the sea. Caspian. Other tribes migrated to Greece and still others followed the paths leading to Scandinavia and Finland, eventually reaching the British Isles. This migration is one of the major events in the history of mankind called the Indo-European invasion. This invasion is characterized and called so because Sanskrit, the Indian language spoken by these Aryans, is the basis of almost all modern European languages such as German, Latin, Greek, French as well as English. and Norwegian.

The Indo-European invasion is the origin of our so-called Western cultures and the most influential focus in the formation of ancient religions and their fusion with the religions of India. All religions including monotheistic theologies like Judaism, Christianity and Islam bear the stamp of Indo-Aryan civilization. These syntheses of cosmogonies and theogonies which merged at this time are major changes which allow the constitution of “city-nation-states” as in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Iran.

At that time, powerful tribes had already undertaken the unification of the world by attacking neighboring ethnic groups and clans and subduing them: it is the policy of power towards universal domination still present today after 4 thousand years of ‘existence.

“The story begins in Sumer”

In Mesopotamia, literally : “the country between the rivers” the Euphrates and the Tigris, two great peoples: the Sumerians, living on the edge of the Persian Gulf and the Akkadians, further north, exchanged many customs among themselves, including gods. and goddesses to constitute a great syncretic mythology because the Middle East is a land of contact and passage between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Sargon the Elder (2325 BC) is therefore the representative of the gods on earth and his people must serve and worship him as such. Sargon I, the all-powerful father-king of the Mesopotamian Empire, is a terrible ambitious man. In a few military campaigns, he subdued the Sumerians, arrived in the north as far as Lebanon, in the west as far as Cyprus, in the east as far as Elam in Iran. He is the one and only master of the universe and proclaims himself “masters of the four regions of the world” and of the “totality of men. This vision of the universal reign represented by the “cross” of the four cardinal points crossed all civilizations as far as China. Athens, Rome, Jerusalem, Mecca will all define themselves one day as the center of the world.

Under his reign, Babylon acquired the mythical magnificence that we know it. The laws, standards, decrees, assigned to the gods who ensured the proper func-

tioning of society since the Paleolithic period come under the divine king authority (the tables of the law). Religious values will found order in the city.

Sargon I and Sargon II (705 BC) continued the territorial expansion by subjugating the kingdom of Israel, Samaria, Syria, Asia Minor and Armenia. Mesopotamian civilization reached its peak. City-temples became city-states. Sargon II became king “of the four regions of the Universe. “

The increase in agricultural output by irrigating the land, the increase in live-stock thanks to the domestication of animals, the development of metallurgy, ceramic techniques and textiles, the appearance of the first fortified villages offering protection, everything converges and promotes population growth which in turn provides the manpower and warriors necessary for the expansion of the nation which in turn increases the power of the despot accordingly. Irreparably, “wild thought” is drawn towards a very human rationalization carrying incredible changes such as writing, calculation and calendar.

But for ideology to survive in society, the despot needs to release some of the production of goods and services and direct it to the administrators and non-producer priests in his service. From overload to overload, the serious transformations of the social relations of production accentuate the exploitation and the subjection of the working classes : “the transformation of things requires the transformation of man into something” that Marcel Gauchet, in *Le désenchantement du monde* will qualify of real slave extortion and whose emblematic figure for centuries to come will be the peasant, the “productive subjugate” par excellence.

While in the Paleolithic era a good-natured animism reigned, the overproduction of game during a successful hunt allowed feasts, dances and great festivals in honor of the natural and supernatural beings that inhabit the universe. More egalitarian and generous, the whole community benefited from the overproduction of food. The village was the perfect representation of cooperation, of adaptation with reciprocity, of a developed and understanding relationship, resulting in an organic and complex fusion richer than the predatory representation of city-states leading to exploitation of the ruthless, parasitic and exhausting environment therefore an instrument of production, accumulation and superabundance which can only be maintained through expansion which therefore opens the way to conflicts, acts of violence and fear.

Such is the case of the toiling masses of the ancient despotic kingdoms forced to erect shrines, temples and palaces in honor of the king while providing his court, administrators and priests with “earthly foods.” This immense surplus labor no longer benefits the entire community but rather an elite which turns out to be an instrument of exploitation for the benefit of social cohesion, hence the paradox of its longevity. As if we better tolerate the autocratic structure of society on condition that it finds a religious and spiritual justification. We are ready to sacrifice ourselves for the despot on condition that this sacrifice also serves to honor God, such is the internal dynamic of Mesopotamian society.

The instinct of domination has replaced, in the hearts of men, its spiritual voca-

tion; the search for raw power replacing the search for the divine. This perverse effort turns to the deification of man himself and of the State: sacred royalty. Humanity will never forget that there was born the most pernicious ideology of despotism: theocracy.

It is clear that from Sumer, religions of slavery were created for political purposes. The power of the gods compensates for the all too obvious human weakness by legitimizing a royal power capable of resisting conflicts and other forces of disintegration exerted against it. Let us not forget that violence between individuals, between clans and families was always likely to destabilize the regime. It was therefore necessary “to establish a power over men, recognized by men, exercised by men, but reinforced and guaranteed by the gods.” “ (Hatzfeld *The roots of religion*, 1993, p. 219)

Never has the individual been so humbled before in any other civilization. The fundamental goal being to reduce the individual to the most humiliating spiritual and temporal bondage. Not only does man no longer recognize himself but no longer even recognizes the other, his brother, like a Cain who sees in the other only a mortal threat; fear radicalizing into murder.

How were the priests able to accomplish such a miracle that had never happened before?

With the Neolithic period, as we have seen, different sources of food supply appear thanks to the techniques of agriculture and breeding. Domestication of plants and animals therefore! And why not domestication of man as to being there?

And Nietzsche's Zarathustra to ask himself “what do these houses mean?” (..) Can it be that real men come out and enter? »The prophet, after reflection,« said at last in grief: «Everything has shrunk! Everywhere I see lower doors and my kind has to bow down to get through. “They have shrunk and are getting smaller and smaller. (...) Basically quite simply, they want only one thing above all: that no one hurts them. Their virtue is what makes them modest and docile; thus of the wolf, they made the dog and of man himself the best domestic animal in the service of man. “ (Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Folio, p. 209)

This observation will be taken up several centuries later by La Boétie in his *Discours sur la servitude volontaire* where he expresses the same observation in these words : power only exists with the consent of those on whom it is exercised.

Sedentary lifestyle puts an end to the “golden age”. We are in the age of contempt for the sedentary. Savage hordes plunder the crops and exterminate the communities that resisted them. Men, women and children are brutally killed or enslaved; the first genocides of humanity are committed and will serve as models for Nebuchadnezzar and many others to this day: genocide of the Armenians in Turkey (1915), holocaust of the Jews in Germany (1930-1945), ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, Kosovo, genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda and African populations in Sudanese Darfur covering the years 1990-2005.

The fear of nomads and the conflicts arising from two radical ways of living in the world, make the sedentary people need protection inside fortified villages. The freedom of the savage hordes is fearful. Like the enclosure, the fortifications create protective barriers and, perverse effect, barriers of enslavement. In this way, internal enslavement is justified by the struggle against external enemies transformed into a scapegoat. Such is the price of security: it encloses the individual and the animals in the same house. The country is then covered with cities; this leads to the creation of kingdoms which bring together several cities under the authority of one. Rivalries between kingdoms lead to war and promote the creation of Empires under the aegis of the victor.

City-states are therefore communities founded on fear and carry within themselves the seeds of their destruction. It is with good reason that Lewis Mumford in *The City Through History* , shows that archaic civilizations possessed this particular advantage of promising protection against the fear of external enemies; but to the extent that they thus seemed to promise a collective solution to the fear that reigned within them, they were based on violence alone and in turn spread the aggravated violence and fear. (Drewermann, *The Spiral of Fear*, 1994, p.330)

Thus men were forced by the fear to submit to religious domestication and the choice of breeding which leads to the behavior of domesticated animals but above all, priests, friends of gods and men, have appropriated the monopoly of human breeding. All order needs power. Mesopotamian model of domestication / reduction of being that still exists; As proof of the history of our Christian missionaries in the Americas:

“Reductions are territorial enclaves where Native people, converted to Catholicism, can settle alongside or among French settlers. The reduction is a project of the Jesuit missionaries to convert and subjugate the Amerindian communities. The reductions were created in Paraguay by the Jesuits and propose a method of colonization allowing the exploitation of Paraguay's resources while ensuring the evangelization of its inhabitants: the Guaranis, the most populous nation in Paraguay. This implied that the freedom of the “Savage” had to be reduced in order to tame him and lead him to Christian civilization. The reduction of physical space is only the prelude to their reduction to Christian values ??through pious religious practice and the renunciation of any indigenous custom contrary to the rules of the Church. This model of evangelization of the Native people of South America will be taken up by the Jesuits in New France, the goal: to transform the nomads into perfect neo-French who would be granted protection. Reductions are therefore part of the political process of any expansionist colonial state. The Jesuits will thus create 5 reductions for 5 Amerindian nations: the Algonquins, the Montagnais, the Hurons, the Iroquois and the Abenaki. The reductions are therefore the direct ancestors of the Amerindian reserves that we know today; the reductions giving priority to the salvation of souls under the French Regime and the reserves, under the English Regime, giving precedence to colonial economic interests. ” (Jettan Marc, *Amerindian Enclaves: The“ Reductions ”of Canada 1637-170, 1994)*

Thus, the Neolithic village is replaced by an urban society of pyramidal structure with the king at the top, then his administration and his servants, then the priests, the merchants and the craftsmen, finally the small people at the same time farmer and soldier. Since men are now grouped together in cities, violence can now be seen as a mechanism of internal political power, of conquest and of organized exploitation. The state legitimizes violence as a regulatory principle for its own ends. So much for the physical, material aspect of the thing.

But again why do men choose to deliberately lock themselves in this enclosure. What are they so afraid of enduring the worst bondage? What have I done to the gods to deserve such a fate?

Faulty body

The Mesopotamians (Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians combined) are seasoned astrologers. From their celestial observations arises an original cosmogony that will have phenomenal repercussions for millennia until today.

Firstly, the conviction that the stars are stable, immutable, immortal and therefore divine is born. The world is divided into two : the perfect and divine supralunar and the imperfect sublunary because human, influence of the pure / impure of the Hindus. But the originality of Mesopotamian astrologers lies in the fact that human imperfection comes from a stellar fall of the soul on Earth. Indeed by noticing the erratic behavior of comets, shooting stars, they construct the concept of souls trapped in chaos.



“Possessed by the inherent disorder of the world, it (the soul) loses its spherical shape and stretches like a comet. It will flow along the Zodiac, taking a layer from each planet : from Saturn, it will take its discursive intelligence, from Jupiter its militant will, from Mars its combative or aggressive mood, from the Sun, the senses and the imagination, from Venus , the impulse of desires, the libido, to Mercury, the gift of speech and finally to the Moon, the sediment that will unite it to a body of flesh. Thus will she incarnate, falling into evil from body to body. » (Marc-Alain Deschamps, This body hated and adored, p.45)

The soul is a “spark of the substance of the stars” which falls towards imperfection because it has erred, transgressed the divine order. This fall into the body becomes her prison where she must purify herself again to regain her divine purity. An astral theology emerges in which the purification of the soul is corollary to the purification of the body. The body begins to cause problems.

And to the Mesopotamian high priest, also an astrologer, to declare that the human condition is what it is, in the grip of physical suffering and doomed to death, because these evils are the sanction of a fall from heaven and any fault is a transgression to an order of the gods. The evil one suffers is dependent on the

fault that one has committed. Previously, in the world of prehistory, evil was associated with unhappiness, that is to say, it corresponded to a fatality suffered by man (illness, failure, injury, death) . The man found himself overwhelmed by events whose effects he suffered, for which he had no responsibility. In short, our ancestor could not intervene since he was immersed in ignorance of the sources of misfortune. He then discovered his helplessness in the face of his destiny and felt a deep insecurity in the face of the outside world. Henceforth, the fault is contingent on the human species and each man is the bearer of this “original fault” by the simple fact of his belonging to humanity.

“We are turds fallen from the anus of the devil. “ (Luther)

The whole Mesopotamian culture is crossed by the chaos of the world, by the violent debauchery of the enemy hordes who reveal to us all the ignominy of which man is capable, we come to think that evil is lodged in man of a so visceral that it has to be tamed. Kant speaks of “ Radical evil . This evil, ancient religion calls it the fall. The fall hypothesis implies that not only is man corrupt, but he finds with fear that he is afraid of himself.

Let us immediately dispel all intentional attempts at an organized plot against man. Rather, it was a matter of first creating a “logical” astral theology and second, establishing a socio-political context consistent with the findings of the Mesopotamian astronomers. We measure the universe, the world, man, society only from the real knowledge of a civilization at a given moment registered in a precise period. The astral discoveries of the Mesopotamians were just as destabilizing for man as the theories of mechanics are for us today.

For the first time in the history of mankind, metaphysical evil appears in the cosmos in the guise of the God King; which means that the nature of man, son of Kingu, is essentially evil and demonic; Evil is in his flesh and is called freedom. This wild, bestial freedom frightens and arouses inner anguish because man knows fundamentally that freedom offers dizzying possibilities and can also make him regress into animality. It is in front of himself that man experiences anguish, the shame of not being able to assume his freedom correctly, such is the meaning of the fall. Taking hold of this anguish, the Mesopotamian clergy presented themselves as the only ones able to “free” man from fear in front of his own freedom. This Mesopotamian story has just created “the original fault. There follows a whole series of precepts, rituals and incantations that man must observe in order to purify himself.

From birth to death, man becomes surrounded on all sides by religion; but for what purpose? Let’s go back to Mesopotamian mythology to discover its meaning. One day, Nammu, mother of the god Enki, god of the waters, complained about the painful labor imposed on the gods. Enki then offers him to create puppets that would do the work for them. From the mud of a sacred river, Enki thus created the human race to serve as slaves to the gods and therefore to the despot king who represents them on earth. A Marxist would see in this the birth of the proletariat.

Moral submission to the gods and even physical submission to the king through

work is then seen as the purification necessary to cleanse the taint of sin.

Aside : Did you know that at the entrance to the Auschwitz camp, it is written : *Arbeit macht frei* , work makes you free. “

These syntheses of cosmogonies, theogonies, social and racial categories which merged at this time are major changes which allowed the constitution of nation-states, as in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Persia, with men-gods at their head. . In fact, these nation-states act as a humanitarian system that protects the entity from external aggression, a sort of survival strategy for the species to use a comparison dear to Darwin. But each of these theocratic-type nation-states taken in isolation introduced the notion of national religion related to a strategy of clan or tribal survival and became a source of division and a stake in territorial war. The first philosophy of a universal nature will be the cosmopolitanism of the Stoic Zeno based on the world human fraternity issued several centuries later, a brilliant idea at the basis of humanism which the Christian Evangelists seized upon and applied to Catholicism.

Repression comes when the ruling classes impose their selfish will on those they dominate to deprive, exploit and crush the weakest. Thus was perpetuated the logic of domination. The first, the proletarians will be subject to work but free, the second subject to work but slaves watched by warriors who ensure social cohesion and the defense of the territory and priests who ensure the spiritual tranquility of the soul in exchange for fidelity temporal in power. The despot man will continue his search for power through totalitarian barbarism towards others unclear to his ethnicity: racism and slavery take shape as state policy.

By creating Metaphysical Evil, Mesopotamian culture engendered a negative view of the world and of human nature. In Mesopotamia appears the insane idea that the body is a prison where the soul that has sinned comes to redeem its fault. This vision based on the fall and the notion of fault inherent in being will emerge, over the course of history, as a deadly shadow over all the civilizations of the region: we think here of the Iranians, the Egyptians, the Jews, to the Arabs and will be at the origin of Manichean Gnosticism which we will study later. Man becomes an impurity on earth and subjected to the most humiliating abjection. “I the dog who blessed the king my lord and dares to approach you” we find in the writings of the time addressed to the despot king. This negative outlook is really the crux of our human condition. The fear of the other, the sudden recognition of the external danger, the anguish of the man terrified by the fear of famines and other natural calamities make that one prefers the consented humiliation if it brings security. This self-domestication of the species is inherent in human culture where life is ritualized, codified through a network of obligations and regulations whose functioning is ordered by religion.

Schelling said in *The Ages of the World* that “anguish is the fundamental feeling of every living creature. “By diverting this” natural “anguish in artificially original fault, the Mesopotamian priests induced” fear in front of freedom and fear in connection with freedom “so that the different kinds of neurosis appear only as desperate forms of death. self-suppression and self-destruction of human

freedom. “ (Drewermann, Le Mal, 1996, p.41)

It should therefore be remembered that in ancient civilizations, man has totally transformed his nomadic freedom into sedentary servitude where, ironically, tyrant and priest affirm to him that he is free in his servitude. And they are right because man has made a decision by which freedom is linked to itself, they are wrong when they think that this decision will last forever.

“Voluntary servitude” becomes a spontaneous decision by everyone in the face of common danger. But be careful up to a point, because if the internal conditions become worse than the external threats then the “rules of the game” no longer hold. A fundamental lesson of human history is that any community, which resorts to the manipulation of its members to protect itself from annihilation, turns into an instrument of terror which will inevitably be destroyed one day by revolt. And the whole of human history will be a slow but progressive liberation from the constraints in force since Antiquity. The collapse of Soviet communism is a recent example.

Evil only exists if it is opposed to good. The Mesopotamian despot succeeded in integrating in one person god / king-warrior / priest, the “holy trinity” of tyrannical power, the supreme guardian of the flock, “the lord of royal pastoral art” of the first imperialist state which was a totalitarian theocratic, the dream still today of all fundamentalists Muslims, Jews and Christians. (Sloterdijk, Rules for the Human Park 2000)

Theocracy is the political reign of Absolute Good, Beauty, Wisdom for the benefit of all, the man who revolts is only impurity, ugliness and madness, this is the dogma that must be respected under penalty of ‘to be’ banished from Paradise. “

Never will a State have reached such a degree of opulence as manifested by the construction of the Palace of Sargon which covers ten hectares dotted with sumptuous gardens and houses two hundred and nine rooms decorated with frescoes and bas-reliefs populated by a crowd of courtiers and priests. This titanic state power was, understandably, a tyranny administered administratively through an imposing bureaucracy and protected by an army unmatched in the ancient world. Enslavement became an essential component of progress, of enrichment, of conquest, of power.

After emptying man of his worth and belittling his beauty, the tyrant with the help of the clergy has made the masses of humans monsters in the service of the conquering gods. Thus man is forced to prove the necessity of his existence only by his productivity alone, so that life in common is weakened by mistrust and anguish. The other becomes a curse and threatens my social position. As an economic competitor, the other risks taking away from me what I need to justify my existence. I must therefore annihilate him by liquidating his part of humanity, which will allow me to use him as a beast of burden or to denigrate him as an anti-man or non-human, fate which will be generally reserved for foreigners. No matter the type of company, the theme always remains the same : we use the other, we lower him, we degrade him, we insult him, we threaten

him, we reject him, we torture him and finally we kill him. because we need it to justify our own existence and verify that we are indispensable to the community.

It is the “fall into evil” where in a final attempt to end existential angst, he accelerates the process of self-destruction of freedom itself. Suddenly he realizes that man is not what he should be, that his life is an aberration, an alienation dictated by fear. All the myths will tell in the form of a narrative the passage from purity to defilement and will attempt to explain the why of social prohibitions and their necessities as a regulatory process of human destiny.

Despair is then seen as a condemnation. Now that man has consented to trade his freedom against the safety of servitude, he knows at all times that he is responsible for his self-alienation. New anguish, because he knows that henceforth he is condemned to revolt, he is condemned to sin periodically so as not to sink into nothingness, hence the drama. Tragedy indeed, when the enslaved man is no longer ashamed of his condition, that he prefers to definitively liquidate the freedom of his existence. Existential anguish is then replaced by despair, a state in which man has lost the courage to revolt. To despair of having to sin, such is the spiral of despair in which freedom and revolt are now fearful.

But why again, this original fault or negative philosophy of the bad man is it so tenacious, why did it not extinguish at the same time as Mesopotamian civilization?



Because the priests were able to create an extraordinary bridge of communication by teaching writing and reading. Now it is obviously through priestly circles that these inventions were recovered, of course, interpreted as signs of divine powers for the benefit of the equally divine king. Once again, all these constructions of human thought converge and “give their guarantee to state power, whose power is inscribed at the same time in the grandiose constructions of an art which exalts the supernatural for the benefit of despots and ruling layers, lay or clerical. » (Lévesque, *Beasts, Gods and Men* 1985, p. 106)

The officiants celebrate the rites as a theatrical staging of a world in the making where men play a role that others have delivered before him, that others will deliver after him. Except that from now on, the piece will be written leaving little room for improvisation. The collective memory transmitted by an oral tradition accessible to all passes into the hands of learned men creating a new status and a specialized power.

For the first time, a clergy is writing the religious history of a people where all the rites, rituals, songs, moralizing sermons are patiently codified and form the

corpus of the first liturgies transmitted in writing. These liturgies are described in *the Encyclopaedia Britannica* as follows : “They are arid hymns to the glory of the gods interspersed with pessimistic descriptions of human suffering describing the abject misery of life. Individualities are rarefied for the sole benefit of a community, a true mystical body, where priests determine the codes of unique thought and precise rules of conduct.

But even more, the priest appropriated a power previously reserved for God, that of forgiving and above all saving man from his moral decay through rituals such as confession and repentance ceremonies where the calamities which threaten men were averted.

By recovering the invention by traders of the alphabet and numbers, the priests decreed that henceforth knowledge will be an essential component of power. It is no longer just a question of leading and taming the already docile human herd, but above all of preventing the revolt of bellicose spirits through the fear of banishment, of exile as a consequence of a fundamental opposition to “ideology. From the creator. Everything leads to making life empty of meaning or rather, the whole of life appears as a punishment where work becomes the only justification of existence and a curse since, whatever one does, human action is in vain. the death. All the founding writings of the Jewish *Torah* , the *Bible*, and the *Koran* were all thought out and produced in the geographical area of ??the East and were influenced by Mesopotamia.

This religious development was marked by the power struggle between the new castes of “urban” priests and the traditional shamans identified with the “religion of hunting” or “religion of nature. While the caste of priests represented the current of general specialization of society in different trades, the shaman always confused him by his versatility, at the same time, magician, sorcerer, healer, diviner.

Since Neolithic times, we have witnessed a real denial of the shaman intrinsically linked to nomadism. He is the master of changing practices adapted to places and types of dating. He acts alone, does not need a permanent temple, but above all he has the power of direct contact with the spirits. He is the first to take the “mystical paths” to the beyond, to establish the link between Heaven and Earth. Having become a religious rival, the shaman will be fought by all sedentary societies and doomed to contempt. Identified with barbarian hordes, with backward peoples, he will be qualified as an evil being possessed by evil spirits and suffering from madness. Having become suspect for political power, shamanism will gradually be proscribed and doomed to disappearance.

It is at this time that we notice the multiplication of magical practices and the development of occult disciplines, which will later become popular throughout the Asian and Mediterranean world. It wasn’t long before a parallel “religion” took hold and promoted these more “archaic values.” All this so-called occult world will perpetuate the myths, rites and magico-religious rituals of the Paleolithic: reading of the viscera (oracles), the archaic bestiary integrated into the signs of the zodiac; the analogy between mystical signs and reality thus making it possible to master time and thus know the future.

Powerful body

The passage of archaic man from prehistoric times to ancient man therefore spanned several centuries. From this long evolution was born a whole panoply of concepts going from the economic exchange to the social organization while passing by a primitive technique centered mainly on the use of water, fire, earth.

This totality of the powerful harmony was expressed, during tens of millennia in the man, by the animism, religion of the divine presence in all matter, plant, animal or being. It is the religion of fetish objects, of gods personalized by the totem. Until the day when the caste of priest-shamans replaced the peaceful multiplicity of individual totems by the great collective totem, the only reality. Thus, under the influence of priests, the individual must subordinate his personal totem and attach himself to that of the group to the exclusion of all other fetishes.



The set of social relations symbolized by the Great Fetish of the tribe leads the latter to completely reject the Great Fetish of the neighboring tribe, which the ethnologist De Brosses will ironically translate into these terms: “there was no way that the Rat worshipers long lived on good terms with cat worshipers. »Hence the wars between fetishes instrumentalised by shamans of different tribes. Beliefs become a source of fratricidal wars and appear at the same time as the notion of collective totem as a sign of the identity of the first tribes. Yes, the tribal god is downright warrior.

In the beginning, the Sumerian cosmogony was represented by asexual gods with no definite personality who imitated the creative forces of nature; it is the world of primordial waters, harmonious meeting of the animus and the anima where the god Enlil is “father and mother who creates himself.” »Thereafter, a typically terrestrial symbolism makes its entry; the heavenly tree, the rock, sacred mountain, the sun and the moon. Later the gods took on half-human half-animal forms: the lion, eagle, snake and above all the sacred bull. Everything indicates, thereafter, that this civilization is moving towards a theogony where the individuation of the gods is reflected in their human appearance. Bearded gods, long hair in a bun, they represent men of a superior humanity but living according to earthly customs. The king, representing the gods, shares with them the divine substance: the breath of life and the blood.

Google-image / Mesopotamian gods

The gods of tradition are powers that attract and that we fear at the same time. It is therefore normal that the idea of power coincides with this power. But for this power to be embodied in power, it needs a precise ritual so that power is imposed in turn as a god. The chaotic, warlike and terrifying universe in which

the Mesopotamians evolve commands the thirst for powerful gods whose power is reflected in their society.

“The gods are the strength that men would like to have : they are the very power and they respond to fear. Therefore, they are really powerful. Because these social creations do not depend on the vagaries of individual consciousness. They are attested by the group’s attachment to its rituals and in fact, they are there for desire and for fear. Real powers, they are above all the roundabout means by which the desire for power can be assumed without too much anxiety. » (Hatzfeld Henri, *The roots of religion*, 1993, p.192)

Subsequently, man gradually monopolized the animal images of the divine to the point of being the only representative as in Mesopotamia and Egypt. This shift from divine animal representation to man, vicar of God, marks the beginnings of totalitarian states in the history of humanity. The vicissitudes of “real politics” give the kick-off to increasingly hegemonic practices. The gods of the conquered peoples must be enslaved to the new power in order to break any attempt at resistance by the local clergy. More and more appears in the cosmogony of the beginnings of history, a despot man depositary because king of the power of more and more dominant gods.

“The constitution of despotic states, with all the balance of power that it implements, is therefore accompanied by the constitution of a unified pantheon under the influence of domineering deities and, moreover, this process in turn strengthens the power of the state of all the prestige of the phantasmatic. This unification takes place in favor of gods with powerfully marked personalities who are like the projection in the phantasm of the despot and his family ... ” (Lévêque, *Bêtes, dieux et hommes*, 1985)

The cosmos therefore asserts itself as an orderly state around the figure of the king. (Jacobsen) This is how we witness a religious revolution in which the omnipotent god gradually appears, who gives the despot king his hegemonic powers. All religious ritual is in the hands of priests where individual faith is absent. It is, in short, a religion without hope where the role of man is limited to serving the gods and the despot king through work. We can imagine despair as an artificial mutation of “natural” existential anguish into alienation and neurosis imposed, provoked, from the outside. Nausea in the face of the human condition becomes nausea of oneself and often revolt presents itself as the only way out other than suicide. The Empire is therefore constantly upset by series of popular uprisings often suppressed by ruthless wars in which “rivers of blood were shed, cities razed, erased from the face of the earth. “

The political universe of nation-states becomes invested with a religious mission of conquering souls. Gradually a structure of domination of souls is set up by vicars, these “poisoners of life” propagating feelings of fear and guilt in man whom they must enslave to totalitarian power: it is the birth of theocracy. And these ancient religions focused on the search for power and absolute power already contained the germ of their destruction :

“The wars of city-states, for example in Mesopotamia, on the contrary, were

very early aimed at the founding of empires through the long-term subjugation of other city-based kingdoms. The logic of this evolution was to involve later in this strategy of conquest even foreign and distant countries and peoples, the claims to power and greatness soon becoming an autonomous factor, without it being possible to see the end of this evolution. To tell the truth, this excessive development of the aspiration to power, precisely, often already contained the germ of ruin: after a certain time, the control of the occupied territories and of the submissive and always rebellious peoples absorbed too much of its energies, then lost for economic and cultural development. “ (E. Drewermann *Spiral of Fear*, p. 47)

The Mesopotamian Empire disintegrated, its language fell into “oblivion” like Latin and ancient Greek thereafter, only, its writings survive to our days and influenced the entire spiritual history of humanity . And let’s not forget that in Mesopotamia, with the despot, despair was also born.

But before its demise, this pessimistic theology spread to Persia, present-day Iran. Persian theology is at the junction of Indian and Mesopotamian theologies. India and Iran shared the same gods for a long time. When the Aryan warriors settled in Iran, more precisely in ancient Persia, they erected fortified villages on the highlands and were confronted with a new concept, Mesopotamian royalty. Divine worship was rendered there both to the gods and to the king himself. Religion is therefore a political affair and complementary to the conquests which allowed the foundation of one of the greatest empires in history : the Median Empire, the “Empire of the Seven Seas” touching the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Aral Sea, Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf.

The formation of an increasingly centralized political power requires a new religion which is just as strong and above all unequivocal. Then came Zoroaster who amalgamated all the demons of the earth into one terrifying entity. By the first Mesopotamian texts, the fault, the Evil according to the merchant or warlike contacts, infiltrated in the Iranian universe. Inspired by these, Zoroaster or Zarathustra undertook a great reform of manners. Zoroaster - in *Avestique Zoroaster* : “the driver of camels” - is the founding prophet of Mazdaism (628-551 BC) . He based his doctrine on “good thought”, “good word” and “good deed.” “Very quickly a conviction of the universe emerges based on the struggle between antagonisms, that is to say the forces of good versus the forces of evil.

Around 600 BC, an event occurred which will disrupt the conception of the world until today in an irremediable way. It was there, in Iran, that the magus founded the world’s first dualistic religion (Mazdaism): an almighty God (Ahura-mazda), god, Lord of Light opposed to a Devil (Ahriman), the destructive spirit of



Darkness. Thus the magus Zarathustra incarnated Mesopotamian evil in a divine character: the Devil. Not only did he oppose the Devil to God but also damnation to salvation. This dualism will spread throughout Europe and will become the primordial axiom of Western civilization. Lucifer, Satan, Beelzebub, Asmodeus, Astaroth, Belial, Leviathan, Balberith, Mammon, Abaddon, Merihim, Nybas, etc., are all descendants of Ahriman.

Zoroaster, this priest champion of sacred poetry, conceives in his texts, the *Ghâtas* , ancestors of the Gospels, the notion of universal salvation. For him, Good and Evil do not exist in nature but in the mind of man and his freedom gives him the possibility of choosing: paradise or pandemonium. Faced with this existential choice, man, according to Zarathustra, will always choose Evil in preference to Good; it is the easy way. The only hope lies in the final victory of Good over Evil.

The seven capital sins, Good and Evil, salvation, damnation, the good Lord, the bad spirit are then outlined in a philosophy of confrontation. Another important theme of Zoroastrianism is the promise of an eternal life after death, where souls will be decided when crossing the “Chinvat Bridge”, and end up either in Heaven, in Hell or in Purgatory. The notion of resurrection exists, it will occur at the end of time with the advent of “Saoshyant” (the Apocalypse) which will restore justice by a regeneration of the world. Thus the filiation between Mazdaism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam is obvious. (Messadié, General History of the Devil, 1993)

Immortal body.

As much as one can qualify the Persian and Mesopotamian culture as pessimistic, one can affirm the optimism of the Egyptian culture. A cultivating people and a peaceful spirit, the Egyptian seeks harmony with universal forces and thus develops a great love for nature and life. His mythologies celebrate life, even more the victory of life over death: immortality and, it will be this desire for immortality that will propel painting, sculpture and architecture to a rarely reached peak. In this context, it is therefore quite normal that the artist is perceived there as “the one who brings life” thus giving the pictorial and sculptural representation a sacred character.

“Egyptian pictorial art is one of the greatest aesthetic audacities of all time: the representation of faces in profile and of the shoulders from the front, the lower body generally arranged in profile or half-profile. This pose is a pure symbolic convention because it is anatomically abnormal. The legs in profile indicate the walking movement; the front torso makes it possible to represent the movements of the arms more easily, as well as the pectoral decorations; the profile face allows the meticulous representation of tiaras, headdresses and hairstyles, the symbolism of which is central to identifying “the essence of the character” and the very meaning of the fresco. Moving away from blissful realism, the artists represent each part of the body according to their aesthetic requirements, not hesitating to brush aside the illusions of raw reality. (Michel Lemieux, *Voyage au levant, Septentrion*, 1992)

This strange ancient canon of man seen in its entirety will be observed religiously for thirty centuries and will be accompanied by a bestiary of gods characteristic of a prehistoric mentality. Ancient man is still dependent on his past

The cosmogony is represented by Hathor goddess with the horns of cows, mother of Thoth with the head of ibis, god of wisdom; of Seth with donkey ears, god of the desert; of Horus with the head of a falcon, god of life identified with the sun also called Aton or Ra; of Sebek, crocodile-god, master of the waters and of Anubis with the head of a jackal, funerary god; true humanized bestiary. The fundamental principle of Egyptian polytheism was to maintain harmony and avoid the use of force. Moreover, the Egyptian gods were both male and female and changed roles continually depending on the circumstances, with a man acting as a woman and a woman acting as a man. » (Messadié, General History of the Devil, 1993)



“The anthropomorphism of the Egyptian gods has often left traces of their animal origin, recalling the mythological conceptions of hunting peoples. Totemic derivations, of the clan, of the territory or of the function, these images associating men and animals maintain the murky relationship between human consciousness and the wild life to be tamed. They recall the opposition between chaos and the order introduced and renewed by the ritual. A situation very similar to that of prehistoric civilizations is thus found, in a more institutional context. » (Otte, Prehistory of Religions , p.113-114)

On the other hand, the true revolution of the representation was registered in the human statuary because the Egyptian artists were the first, to express the voluptuous grace of the body and the emotion of the soul, followed in this by the Greek statuary. So much for the idealized body of the Pharaoh. What about the real body of the people ?

Following the example of its Mesopotamian neighbors, the spiritual and religious expression of Egyptian society became omnipotent, totalitarian; totalitarianism wanting to be a synthesis of all the myths through a “fundamentalist” ideology aimed at a “utopian reconstruction of society from a global plan” which will bring salvation to humanity, to mankind. Priests, artists, scientists, officials, peasants, slaves, all were subject to the building of the mythical empire where order follows chaos. Utopia actualized in space and time following the daily rhythm of the perpetual solar cycle, the only tangible, visible truth.

“The pharaoh is thus the incarnation of the *ma'at*, a term which is translated by “truth” whose general meaning is “good order. » (Eliade, TI, p. 104)

For centuries and centuries, under the imperial yoke, man, servant of the gods, felt moral suffering, despair and suicide. Around 2200 BC, Egypt sank into civil war and the state collapsed. The tombs are looted, the pyramids vandalized and the mummified bodies thrown into the Nile when suddenly, a “prophet” appeared and presented himself before the pharaoh and declared to him: “authority and justice are with you; but it is the confusion that you install all over the country together with the noise of quarrels. Here each throws him-



self on his neighbor, the men carry out what you commanded them. This shows that your actions created this situation and that you spoke lies. With these words, Ipuwer indicates that the pharaoh no longer behaves like the god-incarnate, everything is called into question; first of all, the original Creation. The pharaoh becomes responsible for the miseries of his people.

The conflict between the pharaoh and his people marked the eruption of Chaos on earth. The words of Ipu-Wer signaling the revolt of the people will find an echo even in Egyptian theology. Evil, hitherto unknown in Egypt, made its official entry. Towards the end of the Fifth Dynasty, the conflict between the pharaoh and the people becomes the conflict between Good and Evil represented by the opposition between the god Horus and Seth. The religious transposition of the dynastic problem is accomplished. Evil, that is to say the revolution of the people, is the enemy of the political King, a pattern that will be found in all religions of monarchical states. Thus the Evil which risks destroying Creation, the metaphysical struggle between light and darkness, order against chaos had both a religious and a political function. The revolt is the fault and the Egyptian clergy, as usual, will take care of reminding man of it. There could only be Good and Evil here below; Good being Pharaoh and Evil being man.

Corrupt body

“History is only the evolution of the idea of God in humanity. “ (Esquinos)

Along with the political message, there is also a theological message. Thus the whole structure of human existence is based solely on the anxiety that one would qualify as “natural.” »And the fundamental natural anguish is strictly linked to the ambivalence of life and death : From prehistoric times, one must consent to kill in order to live, to cut up and eat the animal or plant that one venerates. like a god with the consequence that one cannot survive without being guilty of this murder. What reminds us of Cain’s fratricide against Abel.

The themes of the story such as sin and punishment, mortal hatred and shame, anguish and exile, the threat of peoples and confrontation, the submission of woman and the deification of man are themes on which the history of humanity was built. To this, add the fear of hunger, poverty, disease and physical disabilities, fear of exclusion, annihilation and ultimately death and we have here the general topo of human distress doomed to fear.

Almost 4,000 years ago, with Abraham, Yahweh, the only god, was born. In Yahweh, man transposed there not the powerful harmony but the power of hegemonic power as represented at the time by the Mesopotamian despot Sargon. In short, Yahweh is the Jewish response to Mesopotamian totalitarianism, its identical counterpart which, alone, freed the Jewish people from the tyranny of other nations. Allah is the Arab response to the despot god of Jews and Christians and so on. The concept of God in monotheism is nothing more than a projection in favor of his clan of the fantasized power of hegemonic man.

“The absolute being, the god of man, is his own essence. The power of the object over it is the power of its own essence. (...) What man ... wishes to be, he makes him his God. “ (Feuerbach)

The arrival of monotheistic religions perpetuates the bond of subordination of man to God. Mesopotamia invented the fall, the fault, Iran, the devil, the evil, to lower the individual, worse still, so that the individual justifies his subjugation. The common denominator being that all these “inventions” were made for political reasons. Each being the particular reflection of a political, royal, religious and aristocratic structure of an ancient empire.

All the foundations of the revealed monotheistic religions are therefore in place and it is Judaism which will be the first to welcome them into its midst and Christianity and Islam will follow. All monotheistic theologies have defended God to the detriment of man. Devaluation of the body, of the sexual urges, corporal punishment, in short, complete annihilation of the “I”. Michel Foucault, in *Surveiller et punir* , evokes a body conceived as a target of power, shaped by power so that it expresses the vision of the world desired by power.

History teaches us that the Hebrews suffered for several generations exile and deportation to Babylon in Mesopotamian land. Are we then surprised to discover all the Mesopotamian hatred towards man resurfacing at the source of

Judaism in the *Bible* ? Man, called the glebous, is associated with evil: seeing that the evil of the glebous is multiplied, Iahveh (Yahweh) regrets having made the glebous on earth. “ I will erase the glebe that I created from the faces of the glebe. “ (Genesis VI; 6-7)

The cosmic fall of souls on earth according to Mesopotamian astrologers became in *Genesis* the fall of man, of Adam and Eve, into original sin. What is more, the fall of man brings all of nature with it. In all biblical religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), the earth is a prison from which one must escape. To the curse that strikes man in *Genesis* is added that on the earth where he was born : “... curse the ground for your sake!” By dint of pain, you will get sustenance from it every day of your life. He will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the grass of the field... ”(Gn 3, 17-19)

Salvation cannot come on this cursed land. Thus appears the idea of ??a resurrection. The purified bodies will be reborn following the Apocalypse. This concept of the blessed life after death inspired by Mazdaism left an unhealthy shadow on earthly life. Following the unification of the East by Alexander the Great, from Egypt to India, from Greece to Palestine with a common administration, the West became more permeable to influences from Asia and the Near East. The world found itself radically changed. Twenty years after Alexander’s death, unification collapsed, state divisions return, hatred between brothers resurfaces in unheard-of violence. More importantly, Iranian theological influence became more and more integrated into *Genesis* .

The Iranian gods of Light and Darkness become angels, cherubim fighting evil angels and demons of all kinds led by Satan the exterminator. Very quickly the enemies of Israel are associated with the forces of Darkness which threaten the chosen people.

Because the constant theme of *the Old Testament* is that of the history of genocides practiced by the tribes in the name of Yahweh. War is at the heart of Hebrew theology; the defeats serve to punish Israel for its sins and the victories justify the final destiny of the chosen people is to subordinate all the nations to the law of Yahweh.

Carrying out genocide, in *the Old Testament*, is called “to commit to the forbidden”. Here are a few eloquent examples. Let’s start with *Deuteronomy* attributed to Moses.

“The Lord our God, delivered Og and all his people (...) we have condemned them (...) men, women, children” (Dt 3, 3-6)

“And now Israel, listen to the laws and customs that I myself teach you to put into practice ... You have seen with your own eyes what the Lord did in Baal-Peor: all those who followed the Baal of Peor , the Lord your God has exterminated them ” (Dt 4, 1 and 3)

“Listen, Israel! Today you are going to cross the Jordan to dispossess nations greater than you. (...) You will dispossess them and you will make them disap-

pear immediately. “ (Dt 9, 1-4)

“But the cities of these tribes, which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, are the only ones where you will not let any living being subsist. In fact, you will totally forbid the Hitite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizite, the Hivvite and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has ordered you. “ (Dt 20, 10-7)

“When the Lord your God has brought you into the land you have just taken possession of and has driven out before you many nations ... seven nations more numerous and stronger than you. When the Lord your God will have delivered them to you and that you will have beaten them, you will doom them totally to the prohibition. You will not make an alliance with them, you will not give them mercy. You will not contract a marriage with them, you will not give your daughter to their son, you will not take their daughter for your son. “ (Dt 7, 2-4)

And Joshua, the successor of Moses, pursues this policy of genocide and this racist legislation on marriage with the same religious zeal. First, the Jericho massacre:

“They made all that was in the city forbidden, both man and woman, young man and old man ... slipping them all to the edge of the sword. “(Jos 6,21)

And the litany of massacres continues: “Joshua burned Ai and turned her into ruins forever. “ (Jos 8,28), the extermination of the people of Maqqéda (Jos 10,20), the city of Lachish where Joshua leaves no survivors “ (Jos 10, 34), that of Hebron” where he leaves no survivor as he had treated Eglon “ (10, 37), “ he treated Devir as he had treated Hebron “ (10, 39), “ He left no survivor ... he made all living beings forbidden “ (10, 39 and 40), “no survivors” (11, 8) for the Amotites, the Canaanites, the Prizzites, the Jebusites.

The Bible thus perpetuated the old methods of assimilation of the conquered peoples in force in Mesopotamia and Iran for millennia. (Messadié, 1993)

Since II^e BC, Judaism is in crisis. The high priest Jason and subsequently Menelaus completely Hellenized Jerusalem. Most of the Jews, who had become richer and more prosperous, hardly objected to it. The old priest Mattathias and his sons, who remained faithful to archaic Judaism, murder in public an officer of Antiochus and the soldiers who accompany him. Exasperated, the Syrian monarch Antiochus, suzerain of Palestine, banned Judaic practices by decree. Then begins this latent war, both political and religious because both are inseparable in theocracies, between dissident Jews and pagan occupiers. Both at odds with Hellenized Torah-infidelity Judaism and the presence of pagans in the land promised to the Hebrews, a group of purist Jews form a traditionalist dissident sect: these are the Essenes. (Eliade, volume 2, 1978)

Ugliness invades the world. This unjust world cannot be the work of Yahweh. The Essenes began to study ancient Iranian and Mesopotamian texts. It is then that the break with the Old Testament occurs and that the Devil, Satan appears

identified with an irreconcilable Evil with God. The angel of Darkness has definitely divorced God and this rupture will be told in the *book of Enoch*, called the intertestamentary text, since it is located at the junction between *the Old* and the *New Testament*. These texts linked to *the Old Testament* do not belong to the official *Bible* and contain recent writings and others very old which the Essenes have made the transcription: the famous *Dead Sea Scrolls*. By these manuscripts, the debt of Judaism to Iranian Mazdaism and to its prophet Zarathustra becomes a recognized fact which will reach even Christian theology that one thinks of Satan of course but also of angels and other cherubim and the god Mithras. (The Bible, intertestamentary writings, Gallimard, coll. La Pléiade, 1987)

On the other hand, what is typically Essene is this notion where Time is doomed to an imminent end, convinced that they were that the Judgment was imminent. The Essenes, like the modern evangelical sects among others, await the end of the world, the Apocalypse with growing anxiety and conviction. Not only will the Jewish faith become apocalyptic, but so will Christianity. In the *book of Enoch*, Daniel emphasizes the urgency of repentance, an inevitable consequence of the apocalyptic conception of history as the world approaches the end. The eminent judgment of God is the ultimate political consequence of Israel's triumph. The Apocalypse, as the completion of history, is therefore a political text where the equation is simple: the end of the world is the end of history, the end of history is the triumph of God, the triumph of god is also the triumph of Israel, ultimately the triumph of Israel saves the whole world. Evil will be erased forever and the Devil will be defeated.

The backdrop changes noticeably in the Essene apocalyptic literature. The world is now dominated by the forces of Evil; that is, the demonic powers commanded by Satan. The Roman invader is demonized under the name of Kittim; those for whom military standards and combat arms are objects of religious worship. The army of the Kittims is called “army of Belial”, the Angel of Darkness, of Iranian inspiration. (Dupont-Sommer, The Essene writings discovered near the Dead Sea, 1980)

The Essene text says *the Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* legitimized and supported the armed insurrection against the invader. It is indeed an insurrectionary Hebrew text which expresses well all the hatred, a sacred, fanatic hatred against the ungodly. The community is conceived and organized as a paramilitary militia where each member is a soldier who must avenge the affronts made to Yahweh.

The Iranian enemy of God, Ahriman, made Jewish history as Belial:

“... Wrath of God, furious, against Belial and against all the men of his lot, without any remnant ... “ (Regulation IV; 2)

A single devil embodies all the evil in the world. His power reached its peak when he was also named responsible for natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. All this Evil: illnesses, physical handicaps, follies, torments of the soul, death as well as all natural catastrophes are called “messianic pains”

because they precede deliverance and announce the coming of the savior.

Another puzzling truth Hell, as we know it, does not exist in *the Old Testament*. The *Sheol* where the dead go is “a land of silence and oblivion because of inconsistency and emptiness: the darkness and dust characterize it. It is “the land of no return” an expression borrowed from the Mesopotamians. It is according to the book of Job, “the meeting place of all living” (Job XXX; 23). Hell, Purgatory are late Christian inventions of Essene inspiration.

Another new nuance, the woman, not escaping the misogyny of the Essenes as in the Iranian and Mesopotamian texts, she will be described as the prostitute, the ally of Satan.

“Women are bad, and because they have no authority or power over the man, they use tricks to attract him to her ... The woman cannot defeat the man with his face discovered, but, by the attitudes of a prostitute, she lures him. » (Testament of Ruben in *The Essene Writings Discovered Near the Dead Sea*, 1980)

It is therefore from the great revolt of the Essenes during the great crisis of Judaism that religious and political fundamentalism was born with the odors of terrors where the Devil Belial or Baal, a concept borrowed from Mazdaism, is defined as Bel-Zebub , sworn and eternal enemy of God.

“The borrowing from Mazdaism of the Devil-enemy of God is however obvious. It was, one will have judged from the examples given above, a notion foreign to the Judaism of the origins. But it happened when the identity of the Jewish people was put in danger, first by military domination, then by cultural infiltration, such as the Hellenism which arose from the Roman occupation. It found itself in dereliction, when the Jews despaired of ever regaining their autonomy as a nation and when the Essenes considered themselves the last righteous of their people and the sole custodians of the Torah and Jewish virtue. This loan from the Devil therefore took place mainly for political reasons. » (Messadié, *General History of the Devil*, 1993, p.341)

God will now have an adversary, Satan, the enemy of Good. The world and history are still considered to be dominated by the forces of evil. The Roman occupier is demonic and the Zealot Jews then take up arms. One can go and already affirmed that if the Essenes were the “pious” theorists of religious fundamentalism; the Zealots, for their part, represented the terrorist armed wing.

“... this armed war remains for the Essenes an even more or less distant ideal, postponed to a mysterious deadline, that of the Day of God, while, for the Zealots, it is a present duty, which does not suffer from delay. ; on the practical level, it is clear that such a difference is of capital importance: the Zealots are for effective war, immediate and pending the great war, for guerrilla warfare and assassination. » (Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings Discovered Near the Dead Sea*, p. 412)

This active policy of armed resistance allowed the new sect of the Zealots to

emerge. The essential goal being to involve the whole Jewish community in the armed and bloody insurrection against the authority of Rome and its agents. Essene prophecy aims at general mobilization and the right of revolt. The virulence of the apocalyptic writings *of the Holy War Scroll* was rooted in the experience of the new dissident sect of the Zealots through insurrectionary acts, now called terrorist acts. Since the Kingdom of God is promised to them at the end of Times as well as to hasten the advent and start now the holy war which marks the end of history, such is the fatal strategy of apocalyptic terrorism.

The Essenes, by deciphering the ancient texts, update, in the *Scrolls of the Dead Sea* , the great history of the enslavement of man kept secret for centuries. The fabulous hatred of life and of the guilty man which has been developed, under the pretext of divine love, by an unprecedented system of coercion whose totalitarian trilogy comes down to the three terrorisms of the mind, seeds of our spiritual alienation , social and political:

the Mesopotamian fall associated with original sin:

“You did not take away their evil hearts, so that your law might bear fruit in them. Because it is for having carried this evil heart that Adam, the first, disobeyed and succumbed but also all those who were born of him. This infirmity has become permanent ... ” (IV Esdras; III, 20-22)

Iranian demonology:

“The conquest of the Sons of Light will be undertaken in the first place against the lot of the Sons of Darkness, against the army of Belial ... (Regulations; I, I)

the Jewish Apocalypse:

“As for the signs, behold, there will come a time when the inhabitants of the earth will be terrified. The road of Truth will be hidden and the region of faith will be barren. The injustice will be greater than you see it now and have heard it relate from times gone by ... ” (IV Esdras; V, I-13)

Olympian body.

By giving human form to the gods of Olympus, Greek statuary brought man closer to the divine sphere. From intuition we move on to reason. It is thanks to the *Logos* , the philosophy of reason, that the Greeks were able to break the magical link which united man to the universe. From now on, man, aware of his strength in the face of the universe, wants to reassure himself, to know and to be able by the only virtues of reasoning. In order to rise above nature, man must identify with the gods. All the Greek statuary is there to remind us that henceforth God is in the image of man. The evolution of statuary begins with the works of the Cyclades, flat and polished triangular shapes prefiguring the human. Then, Daedalus, by his knowledge of morphology, will allow the pre-classical statuary to glorify, to deify the body of the man and the woman and, by the physical perfection of the representation of the humans, the sculptors will place the man in the equal of the gods, or better yet, will bring the divinity back

to the human dimension.

The artist gives the gods human appearance in a perfect body. Over the centuries, the golden rule of spatial proportions known as the “canons of Beauty” is codified and passed down from generation to generation, expressing the harmony that underlies the world. The naked body is reserved for the expression of the virility of the man while the female statuary represents the body of the woman draped in a fine linen lingerie which reveals the voluptuousness of the forms, the curves, expression of a suggestive sensuality. .

Google-image / classical sculpture Greece

The “discovery of man” puts to oblivion all the ancient bestiary of Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations and it is on him, alone in the world to enjoy the privileges of intelligence, that he directed his admiration. Thus is born a sacred revaluation of the human condition: the joy of living.

Thanks to this jovial pleasure, the Greek discovers that the body is good, also brings us pleasure to compensate for the misfortunes of the mind. The body is beautiful, sacred by art and, for the first time in the history of mankind, the smile appears on sculpted faces which translate the liberation finally found against the vicissitudes of the gods. The joy of living is the remedy against existential anguish, such is the “Greek miracle. »(Bazin, Histoire de l’art, p. 59-64)



Greek art is there to bear witness to this. The “Greek miracle” of the liberation of man delivered from the forces of the universe by knowledge, this enjoyment of intelligence, is reflected in art by the celebration of a psychological expression hitherto unknown: the smile, the “hieroglyph of felicity.” “

But above all from Greece, we will retain that religion is understandable only by the political role it plays in the City and thus understand that the true God of Greece is the *polis* : the City. Democracy, because it is intimately linked to the civic ideals embodied by the gods, keeps the Devil at a distance, beyond its borders. In this setting, there can be neither absolute good nor absolute evil. The Greek democratic experience shows us beyond any doubt that the God of Good and the Angel of Evil are only logical concepts arising from the slavery stratagems of the totalitarian barbarians.

“Never did a Greek clergy arrogate to itself a supranational right to decide between Good and Evil. The Greek never forgot that he invented his gods and that they were his reflection. I mean: never was a Greek a slave. » (Messadié, p. 198)

The Greek citizen had this advantage which escapes us more and more, he could act concretely, he had a hold on his personal and community life. The Greek gave the preponderance to earthly life. He didn’t need art as an escape (from a

prison) or fantasy art to escape a too disappointing reality, and he didn’t need the hope of an idyllic hereafter. and did not expect salvation in the future. But above all, he knew how to use the past to discern what he wanted to experience in the moment. He didn’t have to run away from reality, art was neither pathological nor neurotic. Art allowed citizens to express their reality without denying it. He loved life and was not afraid to die.

Dionysos, who appeared late in the pantheon of the gods, reminds humans that the erotic experience, the beauty of the human body, collective celebrations - games, dances, songs, theater, banquets - are all religious celebrations of human life. The joy of living is far from being profane enjoyment, on the contrary, it reveals the beatitude of existing in the lived moment: “to live totally but nobly in the present” (Homer) .

“Dionysos is a hymn to life, Associated with the vegetable world and the life of plants, his popular festivals follow the agricultural calendar. It celebrates the manifestation of life in all its forms: water, blood, sperm: the vitality of being. But its cult is contested and its followers sometimes persecuted by classical theologians faithful to the gods of Olympus. Dionysus is disturbing because he questions a whole system of values, the orthodoxy of a religious experience based on the absolute. With Dionysus, we sang, we drank the blessed wine, we walked, we put on make-up and taunted the “stuck” by processions of giant phalluses where we disguised ourselves as animals. The women, dressed in fawn furs, heads crowned with ivy, girded with snakes, leave the houses for the mountains where we dance to the sounds of tympanums and flutes. We eat raw meat as before the discovery of fire, we gorge ourselves with blood in this celebrating the overcoming of the human condition by the spontaneity of acts as total deliverance from the famous moira, fate; men and women united in this dazzling deified orgy. Yes, Dionysos is indeed god of the theater and his disciples actors of their own lives. Euphoria and drunkenness anticipated the life of an orgasmic afterlife. »What make you want to die on the spot! (Eliade, History of Religious Beliefs and Ideas, TI)

We then witness the blossoming of a mysticism of immanence which is inscribed in the horizontality of terrestrial life and no longer in the verticality of transcendence. An immanence therefore expressed through the ecstasy of the body, osmosis with nature, the cycle of life and death experienced on a daily basis; so many ways that lead to satori, to enlightenment here below. Originally, therefore, the body appears as the only real one, the soul is associated with respiration, it is the vital breath, the *pneuma* . The body is the reflection of the soul so a beautiful body, a beautiful face, sparkling eyes reflect a beautiful soul : “the eyes are the mirror of the soul” we still say today. Unfortunately this enhancement of the body was short-lived.

And came Pythagoras (VIth century BC) who established the first a unique link between the traditional vision and the nascent ancient science. Pythagoras traveled to Egypt where he learned from priests and scholars. According to Porphyry, he learned mathematical sciences from the Phoenicians, geometry from the Egyptians, the study of the sky from the Chaldeans and the precepts on the conduct of daily life, he received them from the Persian Magi. Heraclitus

will say of him “that he is of all men the one who drew the most from historical sources; he made a choice in all the works and composed his own wisdom”. Quietly Mesopotamian and Persian thought made its entry into Greece. The myth of Orpheus bears witness to this. Orphism spreads in Greece V^e and IVth century BC through the preaching of the mendicant priests transcribed in *orphicum corpus*. According to legend, Zeus struck down the rebellious Titans and from their ashes were born men. Orphism introduced in Greece the duality of good and evil of the Persian Magi. The body resulting from the titanic element is evil, good is associated with the soul of divine kinship; the soul is henceforth distinct from the body, both delivered to the battles between good and evil.

From the influence of the Pythagoreans and the Orphéotelestes, Plato deduced that the soul, in life, undergoes the punishment of a fault. The body becomes the prison of the soul and even its tomb : “... the soul first of all becomes as without intelligence as soon as it is chained in a mortal body” he wrote in *Le Timée*, (44 ab). A little further on, the influence of Zoroaster, whose science Plato recognizes in *Alcibiades*, (122a) is evident : “the origin of evil is matter and bodily nature” (*Timaeus*, 53a). To purify the soul, cleanse it of its mud, man must choose himself astral light and not flesh of the Titans. This clever mixture of the pure and the impure of the Hindus and the combat, between the light and the darkness of the Persians, leads to a hatred of the body and of life itself. It is clear that Greek philosophy became dependent on ancient religions and is part of the great transmission belt of Mesopotamian astral knowledge and Iranian (Persian) moral precepts responsible for an unhealthy vision of nature and matter coupled with a manifest somatophobia (hatred of the body).

The only reality, the one that really matters, is therefore invisible. The *theos* (Xenophanes) marked the beginnings of the separation between God and Nature. A few years after Xenophanes, Heraclitus seeks “to know the Thought which governs everything and everywhere” and in his quest conceives the logos, the eternal reason as the foundation of all things. As a result of these metaphysical reflections, Anaxagoras deduced a concept which unifies both *theos* and the *logos* and which he called the *noos*, a capital term still today, the famous noosphere, which designates the unity of thought, intelligence and spirit which gives the Universe its order and its beauty.

Socrates (470-399), very happy to discover the concept of Anaxagoras *noos*, begins to read his work only to come out immediately disappointed. Indeed, the physicist was content to speak of intelligible cosmogony without addressing the beneficial consequences for it. Resolutely, Socrates took part for the ethics of the good that is to say, that he is convinced that the *noos* as supreme intelligence endowed his work with the best possible dispositions, such is Providence. God only wants the good, but man is nevertheless responsible for his choices. He then lays the foundations for an idealistic and dogmatic system which slides towards the moral domain: to know oneself, to heal one's body and to act adequately according to the gods. Following him, Plato and Aristotle will take the pilgrim's staff. The sky and the earth form a Nature where the idea of the Good sits at the top according to Plato or the Pure Act will say Aristotle.

So originally, *cosmos* / nature, spirit / knowledge formed a whole, but with the introduction of the concept “ *cosmos* = living being” by Plato, the concept of the Supreme Being and its corollary, the idea of creation. Plato (428-348) will make divine goodness the first cause of our existence because only the goodness of the celestial “Father”, the *poiètès*, the “ *maker* ” allowed the order to emerge from the disorder. “It is indeed impossible for the best Being to produce anything other than what is best” he affirms in the *Timaeus*. He takes the idea of his teacher Socrates who maintains that, from his own point of view, every man seeks what is good and believes to do what contributes to it, nobody seeks what is bad.

According to Plato, our world becomes a living order oriented by the Socratic Good whose soul contains Pythagorean harmony in the musical sense. The harmony of the Soul of the world becomes the symphony by which the elements of the world and the movement of the heavens come together and where the Good largely outweighs the Evil.

As we have seen in Mesopotamia, the invention of the soul of cosmic origin induces a negation of terrestrial life, of nature and of the body; the ideal is elsewhere, in Heaven. The soul is, on the one hand, considered as an element foreign to earthly life imprisoned in a heavy body. This concept of the soul in exile on earth means, on the other hand, that real life begins after death in a hereafter where the soul freed from earthly attraction regains its divine nature. This rejection of the real world was at the heart of the idealistic philosophy developed by Plato and his disciples, a philosophy which would become religion when reclaimed by the Christian Evangelists, mainly Paul of Tarsus.

Between 800 and 200 BC took place a prodigious intellectual revolution crossing China, India, Persia, Palestine and of course Greece. This period described as “axial” by Karl Jaspers in *Origin and meaning of history*, represents a pivotal moment when the principle of individuality bursts into history. And it was Roman law that erected the great legal principles of freedom, autonomy and responsibility confirming that the *persona* is the true nature of the individual. Morally, man discovers an interiority which places him alone before the creator; behind the collective destiny there is a personality that seeks to merge with the divine. This intimate relationship with an interiorized divine allows communion between the greatness of God and the autonomy of human thought.

But in return, the man discovers an interior life certainly but also a completely new loneliness. A phenomenal reversal of perspective takes hold with Christianity where man becomes solely responsible for its edification, he finds himself alone in the face of evil and sin and owes his salvation only to his sole desire for redemption, further accentuating the dichotomy between soul and body. Christianity and most religions can not exercise control over the individual without the admission of the fault which reinforces the feeling of guilt of the man vis-a-vis the demands of his god.

Thus a whole network of correspondences emerges between the Christian religious tradition and the ancient myths, a network which makes it possible to

identify the great evils which strike the human condition, including the tragedy of the fall of the soul into a body soiled by sin, anguish of damnation, the weight of divine punishment, all fundamental elements in the formation of the Western personality and the speeches which fertilize our imagination and haunt our unconscious.

Glorious body

Nothing can happen without a god being sacrificed for it, such is the natural primitive thought that Christianity recovered in its favor.

“ If we search for the spiritual origins of Christianity going back to pre-Christian antecedents, we see Judaism and Mazdaism arising from the cruel trial of peoples crushed under the embrace of Assyrian militarism. Even older forms of religious revelation, symbolized by the characters of Moses and Abraham, correlate with the decline and fall of Egyptian or even Sumerian civilization. The suffering resulting from the collapse of the Greco-Roman civilization created the spiritual climate from which Christianity arose. It almost seems that civilizations must disappear for higher religions to emerge ... ” (Toynbee, *The Story*, 1995)

Politically, Jesus represents the middle road between pro-Roman Hellenized Judaism and traditionalist Essene Judaism. Spiritually, Jesus fulfills exactly the same function assigned to Mithras in Iranian Mazdaism, that is, the celestial intermediary between two antagonists. One thing is certain: Jesus does not at all share the Essene ideology of holy war. But on the contrary, this does not prevent the numerous connections between the Essene writings and the *New Testament*, it does not prevent the irruption of the Iranian hinterland in the genesis of the *New Testament* t.

It is in this explosive context of insurrection that a young prophet John the Baptist roamed the banks of the Jordan, exhorting the Jews to purify themselves of their faults by baptism. John the Baptist announced the imminence of the Kingdom and thousands of people flocked from all over Palestine including Jesus, originally from Nazareth in Galilee. Following the baptism, Jesus withdrew into the desert where he underwent various trials, including fasting, a sort of initiatory rite and the assaults of Satan. The arrival of Jesus in the ancient pantheon marked an obvious rupture. His acts testify to a love of life in clear opposition to the ancient mentalities of hatred then in force.

Since Mesopotamia that the high priests use the fall to erect a system of serfdom and counter the revolt, here is a man, a total reversal of situation, will make religion a revolutionary movement. The Messiah will nullify the consequences of the original Mesopotamian Fault which has been running for nearly 4,000 years. The body regains its purity. Let us not forget that exorcisms are an important part of Jesus' ministry. He never ceases to deliver people from demons, servants of Satan.

“When evening fell, they brought many to him who were possessed by demons, and he drove them out with one word ...” (Mt., VII; 16. Lk, IV; 40-41)

Seems like the world of Jesus is filled with the possessed and hysterical that much later we will be diagnosed with mental illnesses, in short, Jesus “lives in a world of fools.” Mental illness is like the demon, an identification that continues to this day in many communities.

“This behavior, characteristic of a feeling of guilt, shows to what extent the collective neurosis, that of an entire people awaiting the chastisement, the Judgment and the Apocalypse, had spread among the people at the time of Jesus . » (Messadié, p, 371, note 8)

Jesus' baptism and healings demonstrate man's victory over Evil. “It is all done,” he said on the cross. Jesus takes upon himself all the sins of the world, all metaphysical evil and by his sacrifice frees us from anguish and fears; Satan is defeated. Man can continue his life with joy; Hallelujah! There you have it, the revolution, the liberation from Mesopotamian fault, the deliverance from Iranian alienation, the end of original sin, despotism and enslavement. But, it is badly to know the men and their Church.

Unfortunately, it will be so with the Evangelists and their interpretations of the Christ message. Already in Luke, we notice the influence of Zoroaster when he qualifies Christ as “Son of Light” and when he opposes him to darkness when he names Satan “Prince of this world”. In doing so, he again introduces the separation of the body from the spirit : “it is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is useless ” (Luke 6,63) . But it was Paul of Tarsus who manifested an obvious hatred of the body to the point of obsession : “I am a being of flesh, sold under the power of sin” (Romans, 7, 24-35) . This contempt for the flesh leads to contempt for the woman through whom sin happened : “I do not allow a woman to teach or to make the law to men. May she be quiet... (Timothy 2, 12). Yet says Genesis : “Then God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him male and female. “ But the apostle Paul skewed the message quite a bit when he translated: God created man in his own image. Then he created woman in the image of man. The woman would therefore be a second-rate imitation, the copy of a copy.

The encounter between the Apostle Paul and Greek thought played a decisive role in the development of Christianity. Indeed, the researches of the exegetes have shown that the Apostolic *Epistles* use without embarrassment the philosophy of Greco-Roman inspiration, to the point of plagiarizing word for word the moral concepts of Seneca, for example. Paul's pilgrimage to Greece brings him into contact with the thought of Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle. Paul must make a choice. Aristotle holds firmly to the unity of body and mind while Plato not only adopts the concept of separation but induces the body of a suspicious malignancy; a position that Paul ultimately adopted even though it was contrary to Christ's teaching.

But above all, the influence of John and Paul were decisive in the slow but perpetual degradation of the Christian body and of life on earth. By introducing into nascent Christianity the Iranian sources of Light-Darkness, body-mind, pure-impure dualism, they contributed to the expansion of an Essene negativity

towards life absent from the real teaching of Christ. We can even affirm that this return of oriental concepts is a real contamination of the *New Testament*, an irremediable philosophical betrayal of the mind of Christ.

In this sense the Eucharist (this is my body and my blood) is a striking ceremony. Indeed, all the religions of Antiquity, as much in the East as in the West, proposed prescriptions on purity and especially detailed dietary restrictions which manifested the ethnicity of believers and were objects of divisions between men. No Jew, Egyptian, Persian, Abyssinian, Chaldean of different faiths could eat or drink together, they could hardly speak to each other. The Christian communion comes to abolish all this archaic segregation and rather proposed the friendly meal in the sharing. By addressing all peoples without restriction, Christianity thus became the first possible universal religion and the Eucharist was its supreme manifestation.

But the theological negativity of both nature and body will prevail and reach its peak with Mani. The sinful body takes on the unhealthy attributes of Manichaeism. The acceptance of the evil vision of the world of the Essenes by the Christians opens the door wide to the prophet Mani, emulator of Zarathustra, who was, coming from the East, the most serious theological competitor of Christianity.



Mani, a Persian magus, around 125 AD, reinterpreted all the sacred texts at his disposal. He incorporated into his philosophy a good number of Iranian, Indian, Judeo-Christian, Egyptian-Christian and Greek Orphism conceptions. Sometimes called Manichaeism or Gnosticism, this ancient religion will greatly influence nascent Christianity by offering not only a moral but above all a total, absolute science : gnosis.

“Since the world is dominated by ignorance and ruled by the Powers of Evil, the Gnostic finds himself completely alienated from his own culture and rejects all of its norms and institutions. The freedom obtained by gnosis (superior scholarly knowledge) allows him to freely dispose of himself and to act as he pleases. The Gnostic is part of an elite, (erudite) the result of a selection decided by the Spirit. He belongs to the class of “pneumatics” (spirits) or “Spirituals”, the “Perfects”, the only ones who will be saved. Deliverance can only be obtained through gnosis, the only true science, that which saves. (...) Mani “explains” the causes of human decline by retracing the different episodes of the fall and the captivity of the divine soul in matter. (...) We understand why the

Manicheans considered their doctrine as the most “true”, that is to say more “scientific” than the other religions: it is because it explained the totality of reality by a chain of cause and effect. (...) God is not interested in man as such but in the soul which is of divine origin and precedes the appearance of the human species. In other words, only the soul deserves to be saved. (Eliade T-2, p. 362-375)

The soul is bewitched, perverted by the spells of the body. According to the prophet Mani, the King of Light and the King of Darkness are engaged in a merciless fight to possess this soul. Here we see the direct influence of Zarathustra. The body, this “insane thing” makes us a slave to its desires and drags the soul into a dizzying fall. The body is an obstacle : this is the credo of Manichaeism. Only purification by the separation of the soul from the body can deliver us. As we can see, the body is not only the origin of evil, it is also its manifestation, the place of its fulfillment.

So it will be with the natural world. Manichean thought denigrates everything that lives on earth. All myths related to nature, such as fertility and sexuality, are excluded and even fought.

From everywhere the contenders for the throne of the State religion are flocking, let us think of Mithraism, Manichaeism and Gnosticism which in many ways resemble Christianity. In addition, Judaism is still alive, attractive and many convert to it. So how did Christianity come to dominate the Roman world?

With the conversion to IVth century Emperor Constantine to Christianity, begins the duality of temporal power versus the spiritual; the temporal pertaining to material and terrestrial goods such as land, houses, wealth but also the government of men, economy, order. This affirmation of two distinct powers is placed under the authority of God. On the one hand, we find the papacy, on the other the emperor, each separately exercising specific powers.

In this sense, the analysis of Christic messianism according to Marcel Gauchet in *Désenchantement du monde* is very revealing. For him, with Jesus, we are witnessing a complete reversal of attitudes and values. While the Jews await a messiah, a sort of universal emperor whose omnipotence will guide them towards total domination; Here comes Jesus, at the antipodes of the desired expectations. While waiting for a monarch of the world at the top of the pyramid, above, Jesus, he is below, “any of the common men.” “” Where the King of the last days would have called for war, Jesus proclaims love. »Radical reversal in which Jesus invites us to free ourselves from all desire for earthly domination. In the *New Testament*, no trace of penance, of indulgence to buy to save one’s soul and above all no supremacy is granted to the Apostles and to the Fathers of the Church, still less the right to enrich themselves from the work of the poor.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus proclaimed that “his kingdom is not of this world” and now the Church, barely three hundred after his death, clings to the most powerful temporal power, abandons the *New Testament* and adopts ulti-

mately the warlike strategy of *the Old Testament*, and therefore denies the messianic and pacifist message of Christ. War is at the heart of Hebrew theology; the defeats serve to punish Israel for its sins and the victories justify the final destiny of the chosen people is to subordinate all the nations to the law of Yahweh. By establishing the division between what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God, Jesus rebels against the notion of theocracy.

“ A god without empire : this is what separates the Christian God from the terrible God of Israel, all in the victory of his faithful, or of the God of Mohammed and the duty he does to true believers to expand by arms reign of true faith. » (Gauchet Marcel, *The disenchantment of the world*, 1985, p.125)

What distinguishes nascent Christianity from its competition is the notion of original Fault Redemption. Jesus kept mankind from falling into the clutches of Satan. An unprecedented human drama played out in the Christ Revelation. Jesus does not speak to us of imminent liberation but of liberation accomplished as the result of his sacrifice, such is the meaning of the new saying of “All is now accomplished.” Man is liberated, radically free.

“But this freedom was rigorously intolerable in the fullness of its consequences, psychologically unbearable, socially frightening of risks and politically insulting to all power. It was not possible. From top to bottom of the social scale and whatever the culture, it was not possible to assume this freedom, to accept the consequences : it is this fundamental impossibility, this refusal of all men, unanimously, which produced the rejection of Christian freedom.” (Ellul, *The Subversion of Christianity*, p.55)

Now liberated, humanity is freed from the Devil, henceforth only man and his God remain in each other's presence. Satan is defeated and must disappear from Christian theology; such is the position defended by Athanasius against the Emperor Constantine.

This position of Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, Father of the Greek Church respectful of the teaching of Jesus, greatly contravenes the hegemonic aims of the Empire and of Roman Christianity. Athanasius is disgraced and Constantine who arrogated to himself the right to decide in theological debates, will ban him from ecclesiastical meetings. It is obvious that for political and religious power the existence of Satan is essential to the progression of the faith and to the political stability of the Empire.

It is urgent to bring the Devil back into the dance. And it was the Father of the Church, Clement of Alexandria, influenced by both Iranian Mazdaism and Manichaeism, who was the first to start the macabre ball. He anathematizes the gods of other religions: “The prophetic word is that all the gods of the nations are images of demons. This is a real declaration of war, an infernal plot against Zeus, Jupiter, Baal, Mazda, Mithra and against all the populations concerned doomed, as it is said, to the ban. The intransigence of the Zealots resurfaced but this time supported by the ecclesiastical power. Terror, again, announces the imminence of the Apocalypse and of salvation, but unlike in the days of the first Zealots, the terror promulgated by the Church is synonymous with State terror-

ism; Catholic religious imperialism copies political imperialism from the Roman Empire.

For Constantine and his successors, it is now clear that Roman hegemony must be accompanied by a theology associated with an equally hegemonic imperial God. The Roman Empire is so vast that the Emperor is forced to divide it into different provinces. But the political unity of the empire is an obsession. Christian monotheism turns out to be a blessing, a real ideological boon allowing to unify the empire under the force of the unique god. The religion of Christ became a concept of socio-political unity of primary importance which will pass through the centuries, let us think of the ideology of the Holy Empire until today, let us think of the fundamentalists monotheists.

Gaining power, to power, Christians, like the Romans, towards them before, engage in persecution. A wave of violence swept over the empire. The houses of the pagans are forcibly opened and the idols destroyed everywhere, in Egypt, Greece, Syria, Iran, Palestine. Following the political model of the construction of the Roman Empire, the Christian bishops rehabilitate the Holy War, of Judeo-Essene inspiration, the only one capable of bringing the universal peace professed by Christ the Savior.

Towards the end of the IVth century, begins a wave of terror and organized destruction. Hordes of monks roam the territory of the Roman Empire and indulge in the ruin of temples and pagan idols with such ferocity that it will spread to us and that we will call religious fundamentalism. Unlike the Zealots who fought against the political and hegemonic aims of the Roman Empire, the monks, strong in the Roman protectorate, engaged in a carnage which had no other goal than that of annihilating the pagan religion and denying the infidels the right to hold religious beliefs other than Christianity. Even more, mathematicians, astronomers, philosophers were publicly lynched. It is an attack in order against all the culture other than Christian which reached its paroxysm when Theodosius II ordered in 448 to burn all the anti-Christian books especially Gnostics.

The massacre of the pagans, their deportation, the confiscation of their property were aimed simply at establishing the hegemony of Christianity over the Empire and thus achieving revenge for past humiliations. All this shows, once again, and from Mesopotamia via Iran and Palestine, that the political despotism inherent in religious concepts seriously contaminated nascent European Christianity. This contamination, this search for temporal powers that are wealth and hegemonic power will give birth, a real betrayal of the Christic message, to the theology of universal domination as a system of total Unity. Note that Muhammad will adopt the same strategy of conquest.

Because let us not forget that Jesus, contrary to the *Torah*, speaks of God as the Father of all, the one who gives life without distinguishing between the elect and the excluded, the pure and the unclean. This is the end of the privileges of a chosen people to whom God gives victory over any people who do not follow him, by giving the very order to exterminate them.

The victory won by the monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) over the pagan naturalistic idols constituted, from this point of view, the greatest mental revolution in our cultural history. At first, Christians continued the Jewish tradition which prohibited the representation of any living thing, man or animal. The early Christian had a real aversion to pagan art and images which served idol worship so well. Subsequently, the penetration of the cultural force of classical Greece, which never hesitated to sculpt the figure of goddesses and gods, favored the emergence of Christian art.

For, Christian art nevertheless needed the language of form, the *visible parler* as Dante would say, the only one capable of joining the minds of the illiterate masses and fighting Gnosticism and nascent Manichaeism. They were not artists but fervent “soldiers of Christ” who used all the stratagems to educate the Romans and to penetrate the Christic precepts in the empire. This primitive Christian art is indeed a graffiti art: the first ancient “taggers” who traced, in a few lines on the walls of the tombs, the symbolic signs and forms associated with the mysteries of Jesus: the dove, the fish, the anchor, the lamb, the vine. This passion for cryptograms to represent Christ, his Passion, the Eucharist and the Redemption gives nascent Christian art an air of pagan esotericism.

The birth of the human form in the Paleolithic statuette, the beauty of the transfigured body among the Greeks, the care given to the body in the Roman baths, all of this fell into disrepair. All references to temporal life were eliminated : the horizon line disappears, nature is mistreated there, all the bodily aestheticism of classical Greece is reduced to the only austere portrait without a smile that denies the expression of the allied movement of life. ; but above all, the image became an abstract symbol translating the truth of the spiritualist dogma in which the Christian soul must free itself from earthly bonds.

These iconoclastic words helped erase the statuary between the VIth century (Byzantine art) to the Romanesque in the XIth century. The statuary resurrected at the end of the XIIth century Gothic art where forms began to protrude slowly but surely reliefs of the cathedrals of Chartres, Reims, Amiens and Paris.

Google-image / cathedrals of Chartres, Reims, Amiens and Paris

Demonic body

The Christianity of the Evangelists establishes a difference between a body without defilement of the earthly paradise, a body that sin has not yet contaminated, the resurrected body, rewards believers who take possession of this transfigured body, and finally, the real body, bearer of error and death. For Christians, the corrupt earthly body acquires its redemption in the hereafter where it becomes ennobled until its glorification.

We owe the first representations of Jesus in icons to Byzantine Christians. This quarrel over images will divide the Christian world for several centuries. The question was settled at the Council of Nicaea in 787 : “He who venerates the icons of Christ, of the Virgin, of the Angels and of the Saints is no longer idola-

trous. The Council thus accepted the Greco-Byzantine visual influence to the detriment of the saving mission and the primacy of the divine Word over the image as decreed by Moses in Judaism.

To distinguish themselves from the Muslim *Koran* , the monks introduced pious images in the form of illuminations to illustrate the biblical texts. Illuminators, artists of genius, sketched masterpieces using awls, quill pens, ink, compasses, rulers and square. Their work was distinguished by the execution of initials in gold leaf.

These illuminations will raise the body of Christ to its highest dignity : the magnified body of the Incarnate Son, the bruised body of Christ of the Passion Glorious body of the risen Jesus whose sacrifice announces the Redemption of men. The body is at the center of the Christian message, the religion of God who takes on a human figure, who is incarnated in a body subsequently scourged, subjected to atrocious torments and wounds whose stigmata, “the five wounds” will be venerated. Ditto for the “precious blood” which has a therapeutic effect as much for the body as for the soul. The Eucharist, for this purpose, is its metaphor. Nothing is more grandiose for the believer than to eat this divine body which keeps away from sin and reaffirms his belonging to the body of Christ.

Too often we forget that Jesus was also a miracle worker, a healer who acted as an archaic shaman who delivered body and spirit through “magical” words and laying on of hands and that this quality has earned him so much recognition that he made the crowds run to meet him, the Church has not forgotten him. In order to facilitate devotion, the Church commissioned the artists to perform performances of holy healers before whom the people could kneel and ask for divine favors. For all the evils and all the misfortunes, the Church put a saint or a saint to whom one could apply, a true copy of the role previously assigned to pagan idols. Such was then the curative function of art. Crowds of sick, blind, crippled people invade places of worship to implore help.

But the physical body is scary. From the glorious idealized body, let’s move on to the real demonized body. It is through the body that man runs the risk of losing himself. “The most beautiful piece of Creation” has become tempting flesh since the Fall; debasement lurks because “the flesh is weak. “

This vision of the body as “poison of the soul” leads to a collapse of the body in social life. So the public baths, theaters, sports amphitheatres disappear, followed by the ban on masks, make-up and other disguises and finally disapproval of secular festivals, laughter and popular dances. (Le Goff, A History of the Body in the Middle Ages, p.37) It was also in the Middle Ages that the Christian Church transformed original sin into sexual sin. The sexual body is daily devalued and the drives and carnal desires strongly repressed.

It was Augustine who most integrated the Gnostic ideas of Evil into Christianity. Since all life here below is bad since the sin of Adam and Eve, the fault is thus transmitted to children from generation to generation by the copulation of parents who, supreme anathema, find pleasure in it.

“Because if we exclude procreation, husbands are nothing more than vile lovers, wives of prostitutes, marital beds in brothels and stepfathers of pimps. » (Saint-Augustine, Against Faustus, 15.7)

The body is qualified as demonic since, according to Augustine’s words, man is born *inter fescas* and *urinam* : “born between shit and urine. Bodily fluids like semen and menstrual blood are considered repugnant and sexuality peaks in bodily depreciation while chastity, abstinence and virginity are highly valued. The infirmities, the handicaps, the “monsters” were divine punishments against the sins of men (fellatio, sodomy, masturbation) ; bumps, excessive warts, blotchy skin, atrophied limbs experienced as bodily “hells”.



According to an old discourse, sins or vices show through through the physiognomy, the gait; the silhouette of the sinner not managing to hide them: “the sin which kills the soul, repeats the body in its dreadful likeness. For nature, therefore, the body is the seat of all evils, of all sins. The Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch, like the medieval Catholic Church, sensed it well. Bosch’s pictorial work defies the laws of nature; one can even add without being mistaken: a work against nature. Bosch’s figures have gaunt heads, pale faces distorted by grins of hatred, faded skin; they give the general impression of living in sick and suffering bodies. Their environment is strewn with broken twigs, thorny branches and sharp tree trunks evoking a disturbing, hideous, monstrous, diabolical nature.

Google-image / Bosch

All of Bosch’s work is also the expression of medieval life and of Manichean-inspired thought under the influence of a despotic clergy who have the right to life and death over the people. Bosch is the painter of the Inquisition, without a doubt. He is the “painter of horror, of true horror, the one who is part of us, who is ourselves. “Bosch’s works are veritable discourse on the failures of nature and of man invaded by evil, an expression of” the nausea of ??the soul “and act as a catharsis, an exorcism in a distant time of modern psychology since the interpretation of dreams was then associated with witchcraft and severely punished by inquisitors.

“ *Comtemptus mundi* “ (to despise the world), this is the state of mind of the Inquisition by which we must “understand the rejection of all sensuality, but also the disapproval of all conduct whose goal is to enjoy life. and accumulate property; it is a warning against the devil’s tricks and an exhortation to resist temptation, in short, everything that words like admonition and mortification evoke. Man must realize that his destiny lies in the hereafter. This is the main message Bosch seems to have recorded in his tables. » (Marijnissen /

Ruyffelaere, L’ABCdaire de Bosch, 2001)

Unfortunately, it is the deadly heritage that we have dragged along like a bullet since the era of ancient despotisms. All our drama comes from the fact that the sacred books always condemn us for this fault and that as a result we are vile, dirty, corrupt: we just deserve what happens to us ... Like Job, poor like Job, we live a humiliation total like a burden that eats away at life. What a tragedy !

Even his earthly Paradise is painted as a haunted, corrupt hellish place, a veritable pandemonium, a garden of vices and terrors. The people, faced with such a spectacle, could only hope to reach as quickly as possible the heavenly garden of Paradise where, according to Bosch, the souls of the righteous and the blessed enjoy eternal bliss, in the company of angels and saints. This was the psycho-educational function of art.

Hieronymus Bosch is the painter of the *Bible* , mainly of insane visions, of catastrophes designed by God: deluges, earthquakes, invasion of locusts, famine, carnage of cities, ruined temples, so many disasters necessary to appease his anger and purify the unholy people.

Bosch is also contemporary with the great reformist movements which are organized all over Europe contesting the lust and corruption of the Catholic elites. Lutherans (1521), Calvinists (1541), Presbyterians (1565), Quakers (1648) imposed on the populations that they control the practices of corporal punishment (the fouettard father) and an ascetic collective life devoid of all festivities, dances, in order to clean up once and for all the corruption of morals in towns and villages.

It is undeniable that in such a context, the body must remain as God created it, without addition or subtraction by man. Leviticus (19-28) prohibits any incision in the body and tattooing of the skin, referring to the pagan practices of barbarian tribes. In addition to the fight against idols, there was the fight against all forms of body modification, which was very popular at the time. Only bodily signs of Christian inspiration (cross or monogram of Christ) were permitted by the Church and the Reformed, a practice which had grown in importance during the Crusades. On the other hand, any other sign will be a sign of infamy and reserved for ungodly beings, criminals, prostitutes. In 1487, two German jurists published the *Malleus Maléficarum* , a veritable medical encyclopedia which made it possible to diagnose the devilish, monstrous signs of all abnormalities : warts, bumps, infirmities, freckles, etc. The Inquisitors will use it to hatefully torture these poor people to purify them.

In the Middle Ages, food deprivation was associated with the spiritual and the fear of hell. Thus, for the early Middle Ages, the miniatures show slender, lean female bodies, reminiscent of the downfall of Adam and Eve. They express a de-eroticization, corresponding well to the constant sinning of the human body, recalling that it is through woman that man fell into sin.

The second woman in the order of creation is declared de facto secondary and is intended for the reproduction of the species similar to any animal female.

Having disobeyed the Supreme Being, she will become submissive : “You will be under the power of your husband and he will rule you” stipulates *Genesis* (3, 16). On the other hand, long before this Judeo-Christian punishment, Aristotle described the woman as “a failed male. This ancient discourse associated with Judeo-Christian punishment denies the humanity of women, confines them to their sole reproductive function and sends the female body back to its animality. For Aristotle always, the woman is passive, a receptacle which is activated in contact with the virile seed. For centuries the idea that it is man who gives life will prevail. The underlying idea that arises then is whether the woman is part of the human kingdom. Until the Middle Ages prevailed the terrible sentence that the woman who led the man into degradation is associated with Evil therefore comes under the animal kingdom where mating is experienced as “bestial pleasure. »The dominant strictly patriarchal discourse since Antiquity therefore wants women to be an animal belonging to the order of nature and it is through this animality that Satan expresses himself. The witch hunt is on and once again, the idea behind this retaliation suggests that the man is afraid of the possible power of women. The woman must be dissociated from power so that the man remains superior to the woman.

The bodies of medieval women are often depicted emaciated, without personality, as without real life. The body is only an enveloping imprisoning the soul, which awaits deliverance. Bodies are quickly places of misfortune, suffering (famine, epidemics, various diseases) corresponding to the Gnostic or Manichean vision of life. (Gilles Boëtsch)

We cannot understand this generalized devaluation of women without grasping the socio-political context of the time. Contrary to popular belief, the Middle Ages were marked by the political emancipation of women with the reigns of Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart and Catherine de Medici. At the theological level, Christine of Siena and Brigitte of Sweden claim autonomy and freedom of expression within the Church. This observation destabilizes male politics to the point of fearing a reversal of power in favor of women. The patriarchy is afraid of the “gynecocracy. Even if the edict of 1682 does away with witchcraft, the female body will remain since a degraded object forever. It got out of the hands of the Inquisitors the better to be grabbed by those of the doctors . (Le Bras Chopard Armelle, The Philosophers Zoo)

The great saga of body hatred continues with flagellant monks whose ascetic practices reverberate among the people. We approach here a masochistic vision that will grow to the point of love of pain and the valuation of pain as an imitation of the sufferings of Christ to achieve Redemption, thereby forgetting that the atrocious sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was aimed primarily at liberating man from these same sufferings. According to the *Gospels* , it was by taking upon himself all the sufferings of men that he saved mankind. It then becomes evident that the men refused this liberation; instead of assuming themselves free, they prefer to fall back into subjugation, moreover never a Greek of the classical period could have imagined that pain allowed spiritual exaltation. The apology of pain inevitably leads to mortifications and lamentations towards the increasingly detestable earthly life.

Let us complete the tragic picture of the decline of the body with the heresiarch sects which all claimed a hatred of the body to varying degrees, however. The Paulicians (Armenia), the Messalians (Syria), the Bogomiles (Bulgaria), the Patarins (Italy), the Cathars (France), the Priscillians (Spain) will all be the channels for disseminating Mazdaism and Machicheism from the Orient to the Christian West. But from diffusion to diffusion, like the peels of onions, these ancient thoughts acquire new concepts that are always moving towards more radicalism. Never was the betrayal of the Christic message so obvious when sects like the Cathars for whom “Christ did not come to save and purify bodies but only to save souls who can only be eternally soiled in promiscuity imprisonment in a body. We understand that the only remedy is to stop procreation, and to put an end to the incarnation by suppressing the human race. » (Deschamps, *Body hated and adored*, p.107) Memorize this quotation well because we will see that it will have repercussions unsuspected until our days.

The Renaissance

Body released.

It was not until the Renaissance that the body in art regained its rights and recovered after fourteen centuries of Christianity where human beings lived bent under the yoke of God. Several currents claim the body at the same time.

Doctors want to study and dissect it with André Vesalius in 1543, while explorers are amazed to discover the bodies of the natives not so different from ours. The relaxation of theological rules is associated with the return of naturalist philosophy while reintegrating the canons of Greek sculpture. Thanks to perspective, the Renaissance painter will build a cube, a canvas representing the scenic space where he can stage both reality and fiction, the human and the divine. It is therefore through painting that the body really regained its fullness now that art has been freed from its theological function.

With Giotto at the end of the XIVth century, the life of sensual forms and emotions takes its course. Giotto began to represent the realities of nature in the so-called “naturalistic” manner and above all gave them an important place in the general composition of the painting. The importance given to nature transforms everything. So the Flemish school dared for the first time to paint a landscape from nature. All the painters of the Renaissance will be inspired by it thereafter to create this new current known as “landscaping”. »Masaccio (1401-1428), sets Italian art on a new path by introducing the notion of perspective and real space. This return to naturalism will continue under the Flemish school of the 15th century with the Van Eyck brothers and their masterpiece *The Mystic Lamb* , a meticulous and dazzling image of men, things and nature to finally reach its poetic form. more elaborate with Botticelli and his *Birth of Venus* .

The Renaissance interest in the autonomous individual led to the creation of portraits of personalities for themselves, free from any symbolic role within church or state. A whole new social class wants to see itself in painting: soldiers, men of power, rich merchants. At the beginning, portrait painters were

inspired by sculpted busts from Greco-Roman antiquity or *facies* in profile of emperors on ancient coins. This is called a numismatic profile.

Under the influence of Flemish painters, geniuses like Leonardo da Vinci, like Titian or like Raphael, will paint their three-quarter models where the represented subject establishes visual contact with the spectator revealing his intimate personality, the gaze being the mirror of the soul. This is the modern portrait!

With *The Mona Lisa* by Leonardo Da Vinci, a cult Renaissance work, the technique of drawing and modeling reaches a very spiritual elevation which restores to the portrait the intimate life of the soul : “the good painter has essentially two things to represent: the character and state of mind,” he declared.

In sculpture, body art par excellence, the masterpiece of the Renaissance is undoubtedly Michael Angel’s *David* (4.34 m high) that he produced between 1501 and 1504, for the seignury of Florence. His *David* was seen as the symbol of the invincibility of the Florentine Republic. It was first installed in Piazza della Signoria, in front of Palazzo Vecchio, Florence City Hall. With this statue, Michelangelo proved to his contemporaries that he surpassed all the artists of his time but also the Greek and Roman artists of Antiquity, adding to the formal beauty a great expressiveness and a powerful meaning.

Unlike Leonardo da Vinci who painted an impressive amount of drawings, sketches, sketches, which, much more than paintings, are the showcase of the inexhaustible research that their author multiplied as much in natural science as in military engineering, Michelangelo did not was interested only in the human body. The perfection achieved by Michelangelo in the representation of the human body cannot be dissociated from his long practice of anatomy. He devoted several years of study to it, much more than Leonardo, in order to understand the dynamics and body mechanics. Yet here with his *David* , we are in a field that has gone beyond simple anatomical accuracy, in an anatomy at the service of expression.

He is the painter of superhuman strength. We are in the illusion of realism, and not in realism. The artist recreates the world in the image of his imagination.



No one has better portrayed vehement forms, expressions of power and despair. The sublimation of these bodies, as experienced by visiting the Sistine Chapel in Rome, is part of the register of the exalted body. But be careful, because if he glorifies the almost titanic power of man, it is the better to “demonstrate its ridiculous weakness with regard to divine omnipotence” and this fact should remind us that the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel are commissioned by the Church. Once again, the artist is at the service of the reign of the church and the work of art affirms the values ??of power, those which serve for its domination.

The true secular study freed from religious constraints that we usually call “proportion of modern man” is attributed to da Vinci who demonstrates how in its perfection the human body is inscribed within two

Perfect geometric shapes, circle and square.

In Roman times, Vitruvius, architect and engineer in the first century BC, wanted to inscribe the human body in perfect geometry. He concludes that a man with arms and legs apart, could be inscribed in the same way in the perfect geometric figures of the circle (*homo ad circulum*) and the square (*homo ad quadratum*).

“The center of the human body is also by nature the navel; in fact, if we lay a man on his back, hands and legs apart, and point a compass at his navel, we will touch tangentially, describing a circle, the tips of the fingers of both hands and of his toes. But that is not all: just as the figure of the circumference is realized in the body, so we will discover the diagram of the square. in fact the measurement is taken of a man from the soles of the feet to the top of the head and that this measurement is transferred to the line defined by his outstretched hands, the width will be found to be equal to the height, as on the square areas squared “. (Vitruve, *De Architectura*, III, 1, 3 in *La quadrature du cercle et ses métamorphoses*, 1993)

During the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci will take again the calculations of Vitruvius and will compose the sketch of the famous drawing on the rules of human proportion. Here then is the most heroic attempt to bring the world back to the measure of man. The male body, let us specify, becomes the basis of unity and under this aspect, the contours of the man-god emerge.

It was not until the painter Dürer with his *Four Books of Human Proportions* (1524) that the proportions of the female body were analyzed for the first time. His study demonstrates, contrary to popular belief that the female body is less perfect than that of man because it is created from a rib of Adam himself created directly by God and in his image, Dürer therefore demonstrates that the beauty of both men and women is an integral part of academic classicism and that the perfect body is essentially a question of art, rather of artistic sensitivity and subjectivity leaving room for as many models as there are. schools.

These studies of geometrically proportioned human bodies open the door to the materialistic speculations of emerging modern science. Let us recall that materialism is a “philosophical position that wants matter to be the only reality”, that matter is the only substance, the unique reason for being and for knowledge. By giving matter a spontaneous creative force and considering movement as its vital act, the resurgent materialism joined the Epicurean precepts of ancient Greece that Engels actualized by writing : “that the mind is itself only the product. the highest of matter. The geometric proportions of man opened the way to a geometric and mathematical view of the universe as well as a mechanistic philosophy of existence.

Machine body.

According to historian Nicholas Mirzoeff, “ it is because art has extraordinary strength that it is necessary to study it. We could also say that we reduce art to decoration when we neglect the social and historical context in which the works are produced. “

Nature must submit to human will and will end up radically upsetting the order of nature which will henceforth depend entirely on the human being as the center of everything. While the Greek world already knows that the earth is a sphere and that it has established its dimensions more or less, it will remain for Christians a disk for another 1,500 years; the human being occupying the central place. The Church, our Holy Mother Church, replaces the universal Mother Earth.

It was not until the Middle Ages when under the influence of the Arabs, mathematics, experimental research, the exact sciences of nature inspired by the Greeks were reintroduced in Europe. A movement seized the spirits.

“For the alchemist, nature reveals its secrets through scientific knowledge and the magical constraint of the occult sciences. The alchemist perpetuates the myth of the blacksmith of prehistory and the technique of transmutation of matter. Always imbued with “religiosity”, it is the mystical drama of God, his life, his death, his resurrection, which is projected onto Matter to transmute it. The alchemist treats Matter like the “priest”, the diviner, interprets the Mysteries. Transmuted Matter acquires the symbol of immortality (Gold) and redemption through the work of alchemist.

The astrologer, the blacksmith, the alchemist, all dream of quick means to come to dominate the environment. The dream directs human activity. Magic becomes a shortcut by which man wants to penetrate the secret and mystery of life. The great originality of alchemy was to create the instruments which allowed the acts of grinding, grinding, burning, distilling, dissolving matter as well as the observation of the results. Alchemy has been the bridge that allowed the imagination to reach the shores of science. “(Mumford, *Technique and Civilization*, 1950)

During the Renaissance the great scientific revolution took place. Previously, in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, things and bodies revealed their essence to man through contemplation which allowed being to come closer to the divine. With Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes and Newton, we are witnessing the stripping of reality and the eviction of God from matter. Copernicus, the first, initiates a real crisis of civilization: the earth is no longer the center of the world, it is the earth which revolves around the sun and not the other way around. With this assertion alone, Copernicus puts an end to nearly twenty-one centuries of a conception of the closed universe as propagated by the *Bible* from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. A whole vision of the world crumbles. Man finds himself lost and alone in the infinite where man is no longer the center.

Thus is expressed the paradox of the Renaissance, on the one hand, the proud man of portraits, of frescoes who suddenly plunges into his smallness in front of the infinite complexity of the world following the discoveries of science.

Unlike Pythagoras for whom mathematics represented the thought of God and nature his symphony, with Galileo, mathematics becomes pure and hard, cold laws while nature begins to decay. The natural signs indicating the presence of God become mathematical and geometric abstractions.

“It (the Universe) is written in the language of mathematics, and its characters are triangles, circles and other geometric figures, without which it is humanly impossible to understand a single word; without them, we set off on an adventure in an obscure labyrinth. “ (Galilee, *He Saggiatore* quoted by Stillman Drake in *Discourses and Opinions of Galileo*, Doubleday Anchor Books, NY USA, 1957, p.237-238)

The year 1632 marks the year in which nature was irreparably defeated. Nature is thus stripped of its forms, its colors, its smells, in short, the intrinsically divine substance replaced by mechanical concepts, purely materialist. Now conquered, the archaic goddess of Mother Earth is emptied of her spiritual substance to fall into disgrace of her new attribute; nature is a machine, God a watchmaker. From now on, man is only a machine, since the whole universe is only a mechanism.

The contempt displayed by the Church towards nature and the human body - the body tends to corruption - opened wide the doors to the mechanical and mechanist visions of applied science. The machine, by its copy of the functions and members of the body, only projected the vision of a mutilated body already martyred, scourged, hated by religion.

The Kingdom of God is in heaven, that of man on earth. Thus the desire of modern man is no longer to contemplate creation but to act and transform the things that surround him which implies the following mutation : man no longer seeks his salvation in the beyond but down here.

In the West, the modern history of the body generally begins with the separation operated by the philosopher René Descartes between body and mind. Descartes will be able to analyze the theological context of the time very well and will hasten to redefine the place of man in the infinite. Although sharing the views of Galileo as well as the scientific revolution which is beginning, Descartes understood that it was necessary to give back to man a place in the infinite under pain of anathema and social seclusion. Since the first certainty is that of my existence revealed by consciousness, by thought (I think therefore I am) and that nothingness, infinity, nature, cannot think, then “I”, my consciousness of to be, is the fulcrum of all knowledge. It is through my consciousness that the world, galaxies, planets, nature, the other exist. Descartes has just placed man again on the throne of the universe, inspired by Christian theology. By actualizing the Incarnation of God in the “I”, Descartes thwarts the Inquisition and gives man an anthropocentric position.

“Mr. Descartes always feared being judged by the Church, which is why we see him taking precautions that go to excess. “ (Bossuet)

Henceforth, the physical body is associated with a mechanism, a machine. By describing the natural world on a purely mechanical basis, Descartes transferred the divine order to the machine, the one that will satisfy our desire for domination. In his *Discourse on Method* , he observes:

“Because they (the difficulties in physics) made me see that it is possible to achieve knowledge which is very useful in life; and that instead of this speculative philosophy which is taught in schools, one can find a practice of it, by which, knowing the force and the actions of fire, water, air, stars, heavens and all the other bodies that surround us, as distinctly as we know the various trades of our craftsmen, we could use them in the same way for all the uses to which they are proper and thus make us masters and possessors of nature. “

So man is not lost in the universe but only lost and only science will allow him to find his way. With Descartes, the universe becomes mechanical, machinist, technological and man is its master. Nature is a material thing, a machine cut off from all spiritual reality.

In fact what is a machine?

“A machine is a complex of non-organic agents with the aim of converting energy, performing work, increasing the mechanical or sensory capacities of the human body, or reducing phenomena to a measurable order and regularity. of life. “(Mumford)

Thus with Descartes appears the notion of organic machine : the physical body.

Thanks to science and technology, modern man, this new demiurge, was to lead barbarian humanity to the Promised Land. Man sublimates his inferiority complex towards God into a powerful megalomania: man will be the creator of the universe, his universe. He created the machine in his image: the divine order succeeded the human order.

Usurping the power of creation from God, Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, became the demiurges of modernity, the instigators of the “metaphysical coup” leading to the divination of man.

This period corresponds to that of man conquering new territories thanks to the discoveries of new continents, new civilizations. The conquests and discoveries of unknown lands fuel fantasies and multiply by ten, by a hundred, monstrous visions. Mouthless men, trunks, libidinous women, “wrinkled skin and breasts hanging down to the ground, sometimes even thrown over the shoulder”, accompanied by hairy men unable to control their libido performing acts against -nature (Muchembled). The foreigner is frightening, hence the need to enslave him.

The body therefore acquires the status of a sophisticated biological machine, proving that the Church is right in separating the soul from the body. Man in spirit is then distinguished from his bodily envelope. The body thus loses all moral and symbolic value to represent only a set of mechanical cogs, pumps and cylinders. This notion of body / machine of the Renaissance perpetuated the enslavement of men developed since the dawn of Antiquity.

Dissected body.

As early as the Middle Ages, the birth of natural theology taught by Thomas D’Aquin around 1250, namely, the religious study of nature with a view to a better understanding of God, proposed that, “in nature, the functions do not spring up at random from an accidental evolution of matter, but rather than matter, bodies, natural elements, organisms, etc. are selected and designed office purposes to continue ... “ (Bertrand, the cosmic revelation, p.242) This quote from St. Paul :” the invisible things of God are made manifest by his visible works (Rom 1.20) is the credo.

This quote from Saint Paul implies that behind the objects hides a secret code which, once revealed, would allow us to meet God face to face. While natural theology sought to decode the physical symbols by which God could communicate with man, modern science will now strive to better understand how creation operates. It is no longer a question of communicating with God through nature, but of understanding the underlying mechanisms. Modern technique in this context is partly explained as the Western willful realization of the Christian dogma of man’s transcendence vis-à-vis nature and his legitimate desire to dominate it. This means that modern Western science has been designed in the lap of Christian theology through the Latin translation of the *Treaty of Medicine* Greek-Arab between the X and XIIth century *Treaty of surgery* in the XIIIth .

The publication of *De Humani corporis Fabrica* (1545) by the Flemish Vesale accentuates the phenomenal development of this new science, anatomy and of a new art, anatomical illustration. Surgeons in the late Middle Ages were said to be practicing a “mechanical art” and for good reason; the body is structured (the bones) borrowed from the architecture of cathedrals, with movement, the body as a “mobile building” becomes a “sea vessel” periods of great maritime expeditions, finally, the body incorporates the features of an entity mechanical in the image of God “watchmaker of the universe. The machine becomes the explanatory model of the physical world, a mechanism made up of parts and therefore capable of being dismantled; the mechanization of the body induces the notion of fragmentation of the parts in order to understand their arrangement. (T-2 Body History, 2006)

Thus Charles Le Brun, official artist of Louis XIV, codifies twenty-three passions and links them to the muscles corresponding to their facial expressions. The facial expression is the result of a purely physical phenomenon and no longer the reflection of the soul. The man-machine replaces more and more the man-zodiac of Antiquity, the latter will join the astrological and palmistry tradition forging closer links with the esoteric tradition of divination.

The notion of body-machine takes shape at the same time of the great territorial discoveries of new continents and exotic countries, a period which marks the significant development of cartography. This will be the case with the dissected body, a veritable exploration of a reservoir of intimate discoveries mapped on anatomical charts. Quietly but surely, the body frees itself from the cosmic order of the Ancients. From the sacred cosmic body, we pass to a materialistic body which is “disenchanted” in a mechanistic science where even the spirit is no longer mystical but bio-chemical. Science thus begins to distance itself from theology; the study of the soul will be abandoned in favor of priests and metaphysicians.

The process of desertification of the being initiated previously by religion was perpetuated in science. By separating the soul from the body, by giving the soul an autonomous reality, it was therefore possible to dissect the functions of the body. Once again it is the woman who will suffer the disastrous repercussions. Under the hand of anatomists, the “living but imperfect” female body with “erased muscles”, “soft breasts and flabby buttocks” is compared to a “lessening, a suborder” where “the ovaries are testes. failures”, the clitoris, “a shriveled and hidden penis. As we can see, the female body is always degraded and judged negatively in relation to the male body; we are far from having grasped the complementarity between them because at that time the only logic that prevailed was that of power and domination. (Le Bras Chopard Armelle, The Philosophers Zoo)

Anatomical waxes (wax molding of the body) experienced a strong popular success in the XVIIIth century. Art and science come together in the representation of all parts of the body, even the most secret. Anatomical waxes are inseparable from the artistic history of the body.

We owe the Sicilian Gaetano Zumbo the first anatomical waxes. He created the wax theaters with stagings seeking to arouse terror in the face of inevitable death. The titles of his works speak for themselves : *The Plague, The Triumph of Time, The Corruption of Bodies and Syphilis* . Many waxes come to furnish the popular cabinets of curiosities all over Europe. This artistic register announces the atmosphere of the English “noir novel” and will culminate with the famous *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

“The XVIIIth was the century of the triumphant anatomy. Like everything forbidden for a long time, anatomy fascinated then, made crowds run all over Europe and the Parisian home was for a long time one of the most fashionable... Anatomical wax cabinets were the prerogative of an “enlightened” elite following the aspirations of the philosophers and the influence of the encyclopedists, of a wealthy class whose prestige they flattered as much as scientific curiosity. The waxes of the Age of Enlightenment were therefore, after all, only the translation in volume of the anatomy treatises of the time, and although anatomists scrupulously verified the imitation work of artists, they still testified to the aesthetic contamination of ‘a scientific approach, going beyond science through art, in this organized staging of the anatomized body. It was a question, perhaps as much for the scientist as for the artist, of making an eternally transmissible model of the human body, a complete model demonstrating all the marvelous construction of the human machine for the scientist, but also the idealized model, guarantor beauty and perfection for the artist according to the neo-classical doctrine which prevailed at that time.”(extract in catalog “ Clair Jean, L’Âme au corps, arts et sciences, 1793-1993 ”1993)

The plastination bodies as practiced at the end of the XXth century has the same function as the anatomical waxes XVIIIth century and arouses the same enthusiasm curious crowds.

Automaton body.

While Vesalius, “father” of anatomy, dissects corpses to understand the functioning of living things, one of the greatest scholars of the Middle Ages, Roger Bacon sought to reproduce the mechanics of movement of the human body and took an interest in to the manufacture of the first Western automaton. Western because as for anatomy, Bacon was inspired by the first translations of the Greco-Roman texts which relate experiences and unheard of characters including Heron of Alexandria, first century Greek mathematician and mechanic who wrote a treatise entitled *Des automates* . Imagine, he then presented a fusional play using cutting edge technology; his anthropomorphic theater featured actor-automatons, a veritable techno theater of the time. With Phylon of Byzantium, they were, in fact, the true precursors of modern scientists who were inspired by them in particular to create characters driven by the principles of hydraulic power. The Arabs were the first to put this technique into practice. The gardens of Baghdad were then populated by artificial birds capable of squawking by beating their wings or by characters who seemed to wander.

Thanks to Bacon, the explorers of the movement of life subsequently touched on all components of the living world, from animals including Leonardo da

Vinci and his animated lion (1499) to the mechanized android.

But the great period of the PLC will be the XVIIIth century with the mechanical engineer Vaucanson. By creating an automaton in the likeness of the human body, Vaucanson intervenes on the very notion of human being as if the will to duplicate or to represent oneself as a machine, testifies in the human being to an original physical and mental injury. to repair and above all, it poses this question still present at the beginning of the third millennium : how far can we substitute the machine for man?

The automaton reached, with Vaucanson, a new status: it became a scientific model and was at the heart of experimental research for the development of machines. Vaucanson's talents were of course noticed by the industry for which he invented many machine tools including an automatic loom.

XVIIth century

Flesh body.

Rubens is the painter of the flesh as much the voluptuous flesh of the bourgeois women of the time as the bruised and abused flesh of the beggars mired in war-like fury, the madness of murder and blood, an era called "The time of the beggars", these men Flanders and Holland drawn up against the Spanish occupation, cruel, violent, a civil war dominated by the Inquisition with these appalling exactions coupled with a war of religions.

To ward off this fantastic whirlwind of male bodies, flesh, fighting and blood, the death instinct will some say, Rubens gave to female bodies their truth of blood, fat, muscles, heavy bellies, swollen breasts of milk, symbols of life. Doesn't he paint *The creation of the milky way* born from the squirt of milk of a goddess with swollen breasts?

Another originality of the Renaissance is undoubtedly the presence of the naked body. Before Rubens, the naked body was reserved for gods, goddesses, mythical heroes and even biblical characters. With Rubens, the nude invades the profane universe of ordinary people and plump flesh, a sort of democratization of the nude including an educational eroticization of the gaze. Table *Venus festive* Rubens is the larger universe of shapes and vitality that was created by a painter, epic painter Delacroix called the "Homer of painting. "

In the XVIIth century, Rubens, or XVIIIth century Regnault or will Girodet paintings closest women observed the new physical realities, giving them blooming morphologies and very sensual body attitudes. The well-nourished bodies of women signified prosperity and open the promise of a more unbridled sexuality ... Women had to be beautiful, young and healthy to provide for the fertility and perpetuation needs of the species. Always confined to her "nature", reduced to her physical beauty alone, Proudhon, in front of these female nudes, made this comment : "Woman is a pretty animal, but she is an animal. » (Quoted in Le Zoo des philosophes, p. 260)

Body and revolution

The body as a negligible object has grown in size throughout history. The ancient practice of massacre of the population made a comeback with the French Revolution. Called the "Great Terror", this period corresponds to a complete devaluation of human life and of the body that supports it. Some have discerned during this period a kind of "theatricality of the torture", of "violence-spectacle" where the popular jubilation related the dismemberment of the bodies, the disemboweling of the entrails, the cutting of the ears and the tongue, the genitals and of the head like so many carnal trophies exhibited during this bloody carnival.

At the beginning of the XIXth century, the "Great Terror" post-revolutionary displayed his deadly shadow over neighboring countries. Painter to the court of Spain, Goya suddenly left royalty following the disillusion of life brought on by the French invasion (1808) followed by a civil war of liberation. A bottomless anguish is born giving shape to characters whose grimaces reveal their dismay in front of the terror. Faces distorted by pain, screaming mouths, poor bug-gers turned puppets littering the battlefields; for Goya, the world has become a slaughterhouse. In the 82 canvases by Goya forming the series entitled *Désastres de la guerre*, the earth is covered with corpses like an immense mass grave where the naked bodies stripped by their murderers intermingle. From this chaos, Goya brings out the grotesque of antagonisms, we are no longer content to kill the enemy but we impale them to humiliate them. Violence and pain spread to civilian populations. Before dying, women are raped, children beheaded, the entire community is devastated. The relentlessness and physical abuse inflicted on the already dead victims reveal the inhuman.

Google-image / Goya disasters of war canalblog

"To tell the truth in war, nothing is really modern (and not new) than the desecrated perception that one can make of it; namely that it is always total, totally destructive and humiliating for those who make it or suffer it, that there are hardly any heroes, that no one comes out of it grown up and that the weak suffer even more seriously during this period. of conflict than in peacetime. From this point of view, Goya projects down to us a non-folkloric and modern vision of war : all wars have "fatal consequences." » (Chimot Jean-Philippe, Les désastres de la guerre, Revue Amnis, p.6, <http://www.univ-brest.fr/amnis>)

XIXth century Body exploited.

It is in the theoretical works entitled *Principia* and *Opticks* that Newton postulates that all observed phenomena involve a mathematical and geometric description in the form of mass, size, volume and movements : God created the world from the principles of geometry and mathematical laws. The Mechanical Order succeeded the order of nature : "a tree is a machine for making wood. " (Descartes)

Thanks to the scientific revolution, space became real; it is then a question of

appropriating it through conquests, time is real; so let's divide it into hours and minutes, matter is real; let's codify it by measuring it and weighing it. Naturalistic science did not escape this instrumental tyranny; she too tried to prioritize nature from man as the supreme value and sought from this perception to establish the orientation of our choices.

Nature existed to be explored, to be invaded; it had to be conquered to be understood. The machine becomes the instrument of this knowledge and the divine order was transferred to the machine; God became the "great watchmaker" of the universe.

Calvin, Luther and the early Reformers and fathers of Protestantism developed such a contempt for nature that they fervently endorsed this new mechanical conception of soulless nature and modern science as a tool of exploitation. The holders of capital and the Church subservient to them preached the Gospel of work, faith in mechanical science and salvation by machine and mechanical routine, especially as the paradise of financial success was at the end of the production line.

It will be up to the Frenchman Auguste Comte (1798-1857) to establish the materialist bases of the scientific religion that is "positivism" going so far as to publish a *positivist Catechism*, a secular calendar of secular festivals replacing the feast of the saints. He published his major work under the title of *Course of Positive Philosophy* supporting "positivism" as the new religion of humanity.

In short, Comte argues neither more nor less that the end of metaphysics is necessary for the advancement of mankind. Any questioning of God and myths is futile; it's not why something exists that matters, but how it works. It is then a question of concentrating on science as an application of the functional phenomenon. By refusing to think beyond the physical, applied science closes the door to any attempt at philosophical exploration of reality and locks human thought into an ideological prison, a sort of single thought. Man is an application of functional phenomena as demonstrated by anatomists that science must develop. Both humans and living beings are considered natural resources, a reservoir of mechanized biological organs.

Saint-Simon, in the *Catechism of Industrialists* (1805), develops a plea in favor of an elite of scholars, artists and industrialists who will take the destiny of men in hand to ensure the happiness of all classes of the society. It is the religion of progress and the missionary role of science where initiates (again!) Are called to free man from barbarism and superstitions.

Science, technique and art therefore form the backbone of the Revolution of all revolutions because they combine in a single project the functional method, the mastery of objects and matter and the "poetic" direction that the destiny of the world must take. 'humanity. Saint-Simonism is therefore positioned as a doctrine of salvation in the same way as Christianity, Islam or Judaism. And Ernest Renan, he, subsequently, in *L'Avenir de la science*, to plead in favor of "a religion of progress whose scientific knowledge would be the new Gospel rationally organizing society." Renan urges society to improve itself through science

and its achievements. " (Papon Time ruptures, 2004, p. 25) Thus was transferred to science, the old religious desire to replace God and overcome death. Modernity is dotted with mechanistic societies which aim to propagate the Gospel of science and salvation through research and invention.

We find this happiness of humanity in the mastery of nature by the sciences since the utopias of the Renaissance: in *Utopia* (1516) by Thomas More, in *La Nouvelle Atlantide* (c. 1600) by Francis Bacon, in *La City of the Sun* (1623) by the Italian Tommaso Campanella, in Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (1637), in *Research on the Nature and the Cause of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) by Adams Smith, in *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (1830) by Auguste Comte, in *l'Avenir de la science* (1890) by Renan, in *Récits des temps futur* (1899) by Wells.

For the new science of salvation, the work of man associated with the machine, man working like an automaton by isolating from the body that the functions which have commercial value are so many methods and concepts which increase their efficiency. How could man cope with such an environment? "The only things that kept them glued to their machine were hunger, ignorance and fear because the worker of that time could not hope for social advancement through money, his earnings barely being enough for his survival. In such conditions, the real "opium of the people" was traditional religion for the soul, but also gin, whiskey and wormwood for the body. (Munford, Techniques et civilization, 1950)

Already in 1770, a writer already called this new industrial world: *The House of Terror* where the poor, men, women and children were kept at work fourteen hours a day and kept in hand by diet and disease because industrial diseases flourished. naturally. What remained was the naked world, an uncultivated land where nature and man were dominated by the mechanical reality of idolatrous machines. From now on, to live is to work like a machine to acquire salvation, such is the credo of modernity.

"Man becomes the image of the thing he hates. "

" *The mechanical man* " (La Mettrie) is perfectly suited to an economic system which was primarily concerned with maximum efficiency; to the technological society where the world was seen as a factory that exploits the environment and man. This saving of money introduced the concept of private property. Civilization slipped from "we" to "I". More calculating and selfish, the man placed his personal advantage above the community. Individualism was synonymous with financial autonomy and power. More power, more money demanded greater productivity, more productivity, greater exploitation of natural and human resources. Specialization, power and wealth fractured the community into classes, the division into classes brought hierarchy and internal struggle, the conflict brought the army as a symbol of the power of the new order, all having as a common denominator regimentation. where the mechanics of man are transformed into collective machines like social insects. Such was the ideal desired in the XIXth century : The superman is trying creator of the new man, the man / machine. Civilized man became a machine in the service of an ideol-

ogy like the Mesopotamian and Egyptian slaves of Antiquity in the service of their gods. Thus a dominant minority as in the times of the despot Sargon and the pharaohs appropriated the command of organizations, the production of goods and the accumulation of wealth.

This pyramidal hierarchy transformed the emotional and spiritual ties inherent in the rural community (cooperation) into mercantile interests and rational contracts inherent in modern society (competitiveness). The originality of modernity has been to crown capitalism as the one and only system of economic exchange. Previously, every element of life cooperated to weave the fabric of civilization; nature being the language of God, henceforth the world belongs to the one who appropriates it: materialism replaced religious asceticism, the body became automated, savings replaced grace as a means of escaping human distress. Domination and exploitation will henceforth be the slogan of the new financial liturgy, with the Stock Exchange replacing the Church.

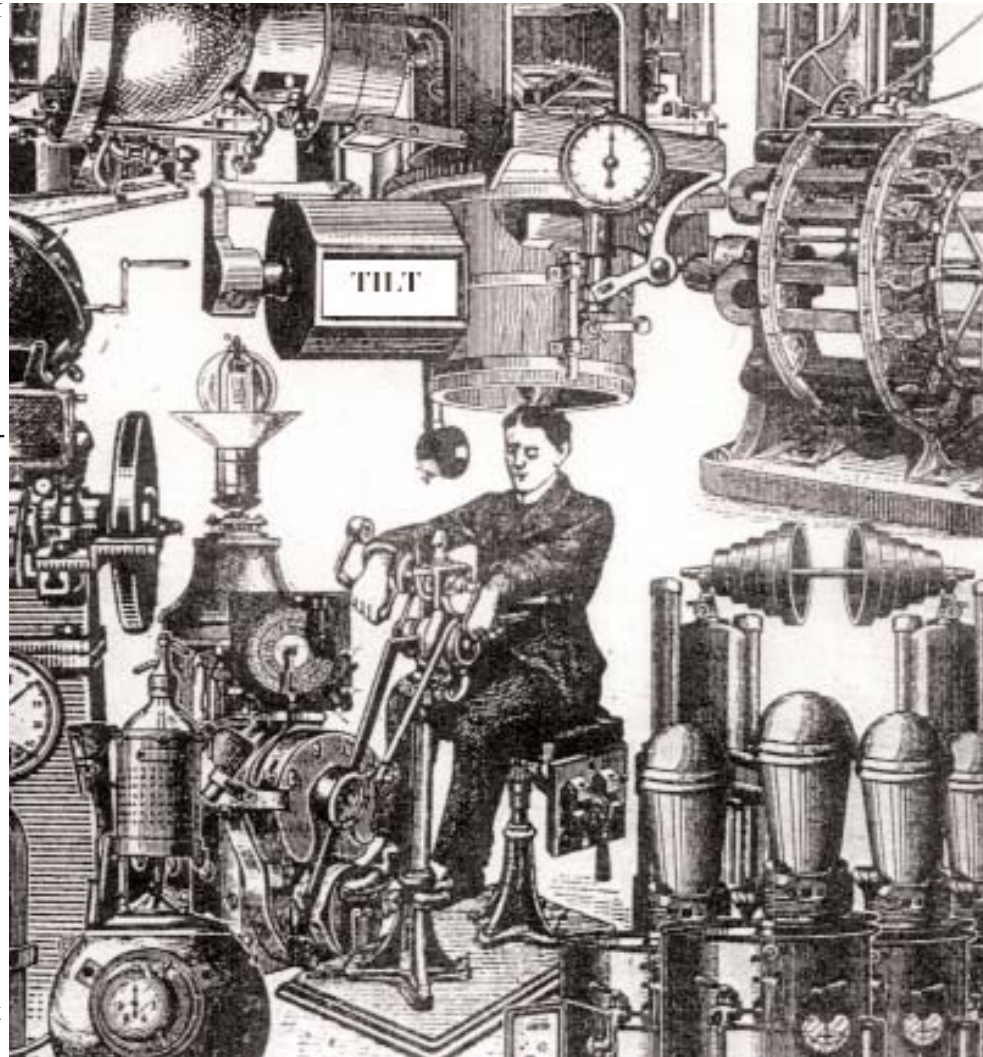
“Taylorism and any work organization that prevailed in the XXth century in Western society stems straight from the worldview disseminated by science” classic “: the world was a big deterministic with mechanical particles and laws governing their interaction, the company must therefore be modeled on what “works”, it must be a great mechanism where men will be the elementary particles whose “interactions” will be regulated by procedures. The quantitative will reign supreme, rate of profit, GNP, etc. will be indicators of the “well-being” of society. » (Jean-Marie Pelt, *God of the universe, science and faith*, 1995)

Man became the idol of himself and the machine his creation, the new religion, the mechanical conception of the Universe. Now all this technicist philosophy of “the mechanical man” reveals the real project of modernity, namely that the knowledge of machines is the new power to be conquered and to conclude that the spirit of modern times aims to “get out of the metaphysical prison. in which human beings are forced to see themselves as creatures of God. “ (Sloterdijk)

Acting on reality, this is the work of the craftsman, the engineer propelled to the

front row. The development of techniques is not only a material revolution but also a cosmological and of course metaphysical upheaval. All the cosmological conception of the Universe, all the traditional conception of objects and forms that man had patiently put in place, collapses like a card game. In the eyes of the historian of science Alexandre Koyré, it is “the most profound revolution accomplished or undergone by the human mind since the invention of the Cosmos by the Greeks. “

But above all, acting on reality implies that the world is imperfect and therefore perfectible, that nature is malleable and subject to the beneficent action of man.



The world is an unfinished work and the destiny of man on earth is to complete the initial work under the auspices or not of God. The world appears more and more like a battlefield where the mighty blind people clash. As with the Gnostics before, the world is bad and the philosopher Hume generalized the idea thus : “A perpetual war is on between all living creatures. “

The archaic nature of primitive peoples and traditional philosophies, as seen, was the reign of Good. Modern nature, a place of violence between species, is the kingdom of Evil. Since the Good is no longer in nature, it must be introduced there by human action. Modern technique thus takes on its metaphysical meaning of Good combating Evil.

“The ancients and the medieval were not unaware of the technique; the Western Middle Ages invented or generalized agricultural processes which allowed an improvement in the human condition, starting with a demographic increase. But these results were not considered to bring a good which would have exceeded the level of the useful and the convenient. For the Moderns, on the other hand, to fight nature is to fight evil and spread good. In this way, technical production sees the strength of moral practice put to its credit. »

(Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 1999, p.240-241)

Nature, the world can no longer help us to become men; only the transformation of the world can participate in the edification of man. From association with nature we move on to its exploitation.

The technique as well as the arts manifested towards the end of the XIX^E century a rebellion of the modern men against the divine one. It is then that an astonishing reversal occurs where the denatured man accepts all the vexations of the machine as so many sacrifices necessary for the restoration of his wounded narcissism. The deification of the machine, the creature of man / god, promised a form of fulfillment hitherto reserved for religions : the Apocalypse.

The machine replaced all other sources of values, and the doctrine of progress tolerated no opponent. A new social order was being born dominated by a bourgeoisie composed of people who were refined but in bad taste, without moral scruples, without general culture or elementary compassion. Only people who valued machines more than men were able to rule for their benefit.

The worker himself lived with his family in unhealthy housing and neighborhoods ravaged by terrible epidemics. The rich were afraid of the poor and the poor feared hunger, disease, unemployment; a constant surplus of unemployed was necessary for wages to stay so low.

Nothing more dreary and sad can emerge from the industrial towns of coal and tar, the “Coketown”: gray houses similar to prison jails, treeless backyards, alleys filled with rubbish, no park or land of games. It is to the English painter JM Turner that we owe the first paintings of mists, dust, industrial fumes through which the eye looks for a ray of sunshine revealing under a veil of steel gray a few shades of azure blue and tender yellows drawing the contours of factory chimneys spewing their pungent odors.

Google-image / Turner

Technopolis was able to progress because we had deliberately eliminated what, in thought, was associated with life: art, poetry, natural rhythm, imagination replaced by speed, production, the desire to power and will to power. “What remained was a naked world, an uncultivated land. “ (Mumford, *Technique and Civilization*, 1950)

Both the environment and human life were treated as abstractions. With the industrial era came massive pollution of waterways and air and its attendant diseases: smallpox, typhoid and tuberculosis. The worker is treated as harshly as the environment or rather like it, as a renewable material to be exploited until it is released into the environment. Smoke from coal factories is to air pollution what poverty is to social pollution. Automata



rates, child exploitation, the day of fourteen hours, life expectancy of twenty years less than the middle class because of industrial diseases, this is the “post-card” of the XVIIIth and XIXth century.

At the beginning of the industrial revolution, the body of the worker, like Hercules, symbolized the strength and power necessary for the accomplishment of his work. But under the repeated assaults of machines, artists began to transcribe the wear and tear of bodies and the brutality of industrial stigmas. The suffering and resignation inscribed on the face of *Coltineur de Charcoal* (1882) by Henri Gervex reflect both the misery of the worker’s body as well as social misery itself.

Google-image / Henri Gervex Coal collector

Historically, life, death, love, hatred, all the antagonists of reality have been regularly visited by artists. Moreover, over the centuries, the latter have always known how to play on the opposition between the anguish of death and the jubilation of life. Christian modernity marks the final break. In the eyes of the philosophers, let us think of Schopenhauer, more and more emerges the feeling that man is a problem, he being responsible for his own misfortune, offering the sad spectacle of the initial catastrophe that he keeps repeating. Existence is beautiful and indeed a catastrophe and man, this runt, an enigma for himself.

Van Gogh also knew the English industrial towns, the “Coketowns” and all their sad misery. The faces of the miners blackened by soot, the gnarled bodies of the women, the faces of children with almost animal eyes, all concentrated on their meager meal of boiled potatoes, such were the painter’s first inspirations. (Mumford, *Technique et civilization*, 1950, p.168-185) Man becomes responsible for the social decadence signs of his inner and existential ugliness.

Debauchery and drunkenness are on the rise. Consciousness is thus affected by a disarray in the face of life, characteristic of melancholy, of the pain of living. Already in *Germinal*, Émile Zola painted a moving and gripping portrait of the workers mired in the social brutalities of the time. He dreamed of writing a new “Human Comedy”, he will write its tragedy, others will show it.

Google-image / Van Gogh drawings

Realistic body

In the XVIII and XIXth century, coupled with the new knowledge of medicine, sexuality is approached from the negative angle of the disease. Syphilis and other venereal perils favor the expansion of the *Society for the Suppression of Vice* throughout Western Europe and America.

Courbet’s realistic canvases show the physical body under ordinary conditions of existence. In a *funeral in Ornans* , Courbet painted a popular scene of colossal size. This pictorial gigantism had until then been reserved for historical canvases of important characters or events. That suddenly, the populace acquired, at least on canvas, an identical status, caused a scandal. There is even talk of one of the first paintings of democratic spirit. To paint faithfully what is,

that is the motto of realism. In *L'Origine du monde*, the plane of the female vulva with its hairiness is close to male fantasies expressed in literature and opens the way to erotic art.

Google-image / Ingres

Google-image / Courbet The origin of the world

Around 1860, the majority of the aristocrats resorted to prostitution quite simply because prostitutes practiced sexual refinements more freely. It is different for the popular classes whose sexual practices are controlled by the Church. Total nudity is incompatible with sexual intercourse; very few women “of the people” indeed dare to undress in front of their husbands. This taboo was transgressed by Degas who painted an unprecedented vision of women of modest conditions occupied in beauty care; not only is the body naked but also palpated, caressed, sensual. So much for the aristocracy and the new emerging bourgeoisie.

Google-image / Degas

The reality of the well-off is juxtaposed with the darker reality of urban crowds seized in a circumscribed world that is often depraved. Consequently, a new science of faces is pointed out, physiognomy which enacts the division between working classes and bourgeois classes based on facial morphology because the bourgeois worried about seeing their status contested are afraid of these distressing faces which merge into the working masses of where the urgency to confirm the social inferiority of the masses. Parallel to the work of ethnologists who classify and index the populations of the colonies to demonstrate the superiority of the white race, the physiologists of the XIX^E century try to discover the morphological features of the born criminal who threatens the established order.

This sampling work will return to the nascent photography from which will emerge the judicial portrait of the depraved in opposition to the conceited portraits of the bourgeoisie. While the photograph of the “poor” reveals the crudeness of their quasi-wild state, the bourgeois portrait in make-up, painted with rice powder is surrounded by a scenic device of hangings, rugs and furniture which confirms its hierarchical power. The birth of stereotypes of easily identifiable social “types”.

Romantic body.

The Romantic movement in the XIXth century, wants the response to the mechanistic worldview. It is through romantic idealism that the drives, carnal desires and pleasures of the sexes were publicly sublimated around the female nude. The paintings of Ingres were the model : smooth body without roughness, without hairiness, inaccessible almost unreal.

At the end of the 19th century, under the influence of the poet Mallarmé, Symbolism strongly inspired painters who were disappointed with the strict appearance of reality. Symbolism promotes an aesthetic of emotion where one trusts the dream rather than cold reason. Symbolism appeared alongside es-

oteric writings. A Russian-American theosophist, Helena Blavatski, after having traveled Europe, North America, Mexico, India and Tibet in search of magical practices, secret cults and spiritualist doctrines, delivers her message in *Isis unveiled* but especially in *The Secret Doctrine* which will exert a great influence on the Symbolist generation but also on the first avant-gardes between 1900 and 1914. From the teachings of the archaic traditions, the alchemist and occult practices, it takes again on its account the feeling, the intuition of solidarity between man and the world.

Romanticism like primitive Christianity is distinguished by its identification with the underprivileged. In them the human drama expresses the confusion of the world. The first concern of novelists, poets, painters and thinkers of the mid-eighteenthth century based on everything that was source of injustice, oppression, falsehood in human relationships, the silent submission to the artificial, in short source of revolt, of despair, of poverty, of disarray among so many men. For them greed, selfishness, spiritual blindness are the vices of civilization. This acute sense of alienation is experienced as an inner exile, a deep nostalgia for a pre-capitalist past which turns into a utopia looking to the future. The romantic is opposed to capitalist-industrial modernity which shamelessly exploits both nature and human beings for strictly economic ends without regard to the well-being of the community; what has been called the “disenchantment of the world” The degradation of human relationships, the poisoning of the air by industrial fumes, the dissolution of qualitative values ??all stem from this source of corruption : market quantification and mechanization of being.

Faced with this observation, the romantics were certain that by dint of courage and self-sacrifice, societies could be transformed in the light of just ideals supported by sufficient fervor and devotion. Refusing the religious dogmatism of both Catholicism and Protestantism, the romantic spirit aspires to a new religiosity or rather a spirituality based on the unity of man, nature and the universe leading to universality, a real communion between people of all origins and cultures.

It was in Charleville, at the age of seventeen that Rimbaud, in revolt against all the past, against the classicism of the language, against the gentrification of his contemporaries, sketched out his theory of the clairvoyant poet, a veritable poetic revolution. He escaped from the prison of language as he escaped from reality to make us discover, with “new” words, mysterious worlds moving behind appearances. Like a “drunken boat” going adrift, he intoned “musical” verses with illuminating and hallucinatory words, like his alcoholic and opiate wanderings. Like a seeker of philosopher’s stone and in constant frantic search for the unknown, the poet sought (*Les Illuminations*) the alchemy of the verb in sobs and sometimes by throwing cries of madness in the turmoil.

The romantic man found body in Rodin’s Symbolist work. The statue of Balzac transfigured the corpulent body of the writer into a physical and spiritual presence; a Balzac with folded arms defying society. Penetrated by the idea of ??a social mission, wanting to take charge of the destiny of humanity, Rodin’s Balzac reflects the romantic position of poets who considered artists as visionaries charged with leading society towards salvation. It will be up to Victor Hugo

to celebrate committed art by creating the doctrine of “art for humanity” : art that must denounce the defects of society and help correct them. The ideal becomes something to be accomplished. (Michel Lacroix, *Is Having an Idea Really Reasonable ?*, p.138-145)

This utopian aspiration commands a revolution against the modern state where the bureaucracy enslaves human beings to a system of mechanical gears as impersonal as a factory. Let us summarize : thus this “left” romanticism, mainly experienced by artists, poets, certain philosophers, writers and some minority politicians, denounce the alienation of human relations, the destruction of nature, the dissolution of the community bonds of solidarity, the isolation of the individual, the only market value, degrading urban living conditions.

“Most poets, novelists, painters were grieved by the new order and denied it in a hundred ways ... Dickens satirized the stock-pilots, the Manchester individualists, the utilities, the pretentious self-made man. Balzac and Zola, painting the new financial order with documentary realism, put beyond any doubt its degradation and its uncleanness. Other artists, along with Morris, turned to the Middle Ages, where Overbeck and Hoffmann in Germany, Chateaubriand and Hugo in France, had preceded them. Others, with Browning, turned to Renaissance Italy; with Doughty, towards primitive Arabia; with Melville and Gauguin, towards the seas of the south; with Thoreau, towards the primitive forests; with Tolstoy, towards the peasants. What were they looking for? Very simple things that could not be found between the railway terminus and the factory: animal self-love, the color in the exterior setting and the emotional depth in the interior landscape, a life lived for its own values, instead of an adulterated life. » (Mumford, *Technique et Civilization*, p.187-188)

Then came Rimbaud’s tragic fight with his mysterious demon in *Une Saison en Enfer* . Frightened by this inner tumult, the poet grasps with sadness that art will never fulfill its promises of liberation, that art is an illusion, that “the disturbance of the senses” no longer has its *raison d’être* since ultimately the art is an institution in the hands of the cultivated. “

Bitter disillusion, the very one which will lead Rimbaud towards external exile, Abyssinia, and which, on the contrary, will take Emile Nelligan with us to the internal exile of depression. These very eloquent lines from *La Romance du vin* apply as much to Rimbaud as to Nelligan its author:

“It’s the reign of bitter laughter and rage
To know that you are a poet and the object of contempt
To know you have a heart and not to be understood
Only by moonlight and great stormy evenings! “

For Rimbaud, the final break with art is over. He has reached the end of a process. Life is Elsewhere. Another break with conservatism, the moral conformism of the average humanist. One cannot understand Rimbaud independently of his time.

But the great current of the time, the “big deal”, is the expressionism, philoso-

phy and art of the disappointed romantic man who has the courage to assert his own depth as the only ploy to ward off personal anxiety and guilt before a civilization so contemptuous of life. Only exile remains, the only one capable of still bringing its share of discoveries. The pilgrim’s expiatory wandering begins. Yes, there is Cain in Rimbaud. Abyssinia became his “*terrae incognitae*” and Aden, a veritable earthly furnace, his “hell”: “I believe myself in hell therefore I am there. »To experience the unknown to the bone marrow, to drift away, to surrender. The alchemist of the verb became an alchemist of life through “the art of movement” by facing every day the daily ordeal of the long walks necessary for the mutation of being. Rimbaud knew how to amputate a part of himself destroyed by the civilization he sought to reconquer by an almost mystical quest. “I is another”. Going to meet it requires the dispossession of oneself in the pain of wandering. “Sooner or later, we find ourselves naked in front of ourselves and others. “ (The career)

“We are all upset backpackers and nomads. “(Meunier)

Rimbaud’s exile is a “romantic work” of the revolt of a young man who prefers to live cursed rather than in stagnation and immobility. He would rather be a man without identity, incognito, a total stranger rather than a recognized poet in a decaying West. Rimbaud in Abyssinia, Gauguin in Oceania, both are looking for a new lease of life, both belong to another “race” and do not want to follow in the footsteps of others. They need new territories, forgotten traditions, mythical revelations, they need to go where lies, as Rimbaud would say, “the key to the ancient feast.” “

None other than Gauguin was able to show the return / desire to allegory and myth. His divinely natural exotic models came to increase the range of male fantasies. Both were disappointed by the European colonialism which came to corrupt the “purity” of exotic peoples.

Google-image / Gauguin

Denatured body.

It is clear that the reduction of the cosmos to a mechanism and of man to a machine had a noticeable consequence on the general degradation of the environment; the current environmental crisis being the reflection of the spiritual crisis of the denatured man. (Nasr Seyyed Hossein, *Religion and the Order of the World*, 2004)

The images from NASA, showing us our beautiful, glowing blue planet against the icy darkness of the sidereal “void”, make it clear that in the end there will be no escape from the harmful consequences of human action on the looming environmental crisis. We no longer have time despite the beautiful utopias of technosciences; human activity has weakened the biosphere too much and highlights the helplessness and lack of courage of the international community.

**“All my methods, all my means are sensible; it’s my goal that’s crazy. “
(Melville)**

This word of Captain Ahab in *Moby Dick* reflects all the proud animosity of man and the almost satanic technical means that are implemented to bring nature (the white whale) in line.

“Apparently, humanity continues to devote itself to the sinister hunt described by Melville, drawn by adventure, the prospect of oil and whales, the inducements of pride, and above all by a pursuit of power that reject love. She also began to consciously contemplate the prospect of utter annihilation which may be brought about by today’s captains at the head of the ship. » (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine*, T.II, 1974, p.511)

Western civilization is focused on the enslavement of nature and the control of the body both physical and social through science supported by political and religious power.

From the beauty, the “wisdom”, the majesty of living beings, animals and plants, we have only retained their food and domestic usefulness and have abandoned them to the lamentable fate to which we have imposed them. The biblical recommendation that man take care of all of God’s creation has not been followed.

The classification into clean and unclean animals, an endless list of dietary precepts and a series of decrees including the prohibition of sodomy with beasts, this is the context in which a monotheistic theologian learns about animals in *the Old Testament* . Regarding nature in general:

“Submit it; rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky and all the animals that crawl on the earth. “ (Genesis I, 28)

With regard to animals in particular :

“Do not make yourselves filthy with all these swarming critters, do not infect yourself with them and do not get infected with them. For it is I, Yahweh, who am your God. You have sanctified yourselves and you have become holy because I am holy; do not make yourself unclean with all these critters that crawl on the earth. (Lev 11 : 43-44)

Moreover, Yahweh, God and Allah entrusted the world with all its creatures to man to fulfill His commandments by ruling it. Subsequently, nature completely disappeared as a mythical reference in the desert of monotheistic religions.

“It was the prophets, the apostles and their successors, the missionaries, who convinced the Western world that a stone (considered sacred by some) was only a stone, that the planets and the stars were only cosmic objects; in other words, that they are (and cannot be) neither gods, nor angels, nor demons. It is as a result of this long process of desacralization of Nature that the Westerner has managed to see a natural object, where his ancestors saw hierophanies, sacred presences. “ (Eliade)

“The current environmental crisis is essentially spiritual. From both a historical and a practical point of view, it cannot be approached without reference to religion and ethics. American historian Lynn White quite rightly attributed the causes of the problem to Christian theology, especially the Western Church which exploited the verses of Genesis containing the order given by God to the first human beings to “dominate the Earth” in order to encourage them, as Descartes bluntly said to to be the “masters and possessors of Nature” This attitude was again inspired by a theology which emphasized the superiority of humans because of their “logic” considered as “the image of God” in man. made human beings stand out from the rest of Creation and encouraged them to regard with contempt all that is neither rational nor human. “ (Metropolitan Jean de Pergamon, *Ecological asceticism*, 1995)

On the other hand, as several exegetes note, Christianity put an end to animal sacrifices, rituals practiced since the dawn of time and endorsed by Judaism. As Saint-Augustine emphasizes, “the divine has nothing to do with cattle” since the Son of God himself sacrificed himself on the cross. The abandonment of animal sacrifices did not end their exploitation, however, everywhere in the world.

Five hundred years ago, we gave birth to an economic machine that like an ogre will eat up all available resources while supplies last. The notion of an elected people was transformed into an elected species: only man is holy and this anthropocentric notion will have inestimable consequences on our relationship with the environment and on other animal and plant species. Continuing its momentum, Descartes then proposes the thesis according to which it is impossible to find a difference between the animal and the machine. Spinoza, for his part, declared that humans have the right “to use animals as we please and to treat them according to what suits us best since they do not agree with us by nature and their feelings are inherently different from human feelings. “

Finally, the philosopher Fichte completed the picture and affirmed in his *Doctrine du droit naturel* in 1796, that all domestic animals are “under the tutelage” of man for “regular use” and are only “property” . As for wild animals, they are “harmful” and “considered an enemy”. This is how what in the West is commonplace was formulated: anthropocentrism does not recognize a right to creature, it only knows men and their needs.

The contact between the West and the so-called natural societies was dramatic for the latter. In most “naturalistic” cosmogonies as developed in Asia, Oceania, Africa, the Americas, conflicts between antagonistic forces which result in the creation of life in no way tarnish man’s reputation. Nature is far from being a source of sin, on the contrary, it is a source of bliss. The native feels himself brother to animals, plants, stars, rain and wind. All spirituality converges on the celebration of life, which is nevertheless darkened by disease and death. However this evil resulting from diseases, death, disasters are considered as natural acts represented by demons that it is possible to ward off by rituals and mysterious words carrying healing of which the shaman is the depositary. There is no trace of a fault contingent on humanity that man is called to expiate by repentance and bodily mortifications.

The descriptions, among others of Bougainville in his *travel journal around the world - 1766-1769*, aroused a stir in Europe.

“The character of the nation struck us as very gentle and kind. There does not seem to be any civil war on the island, no particular hatred, although the country is divided into small townships which each have their independent lord. It is probable that the Tahitians practice among themselves a good faith of which they do not doubt. Whether they are at home or not, day or night, the houses are open. Each one picks the fruit from the first tree he meets, takes some from the house he enters. It would appear that for the things absolutely necessary for life, there would be no property and that everything is for everyone. (...) I will only notice here that, in delicate circumstances, the lord of the canton does not decide without the advice of a council. (...) Jealousy here is such a strange feeling that the husband is usually the first to urge his wife to give herself up. A girl feels no embarrassment in this regard; everything invites him to follow the natural inclination of his heart or the law of his senses, and public applause honors his defeat. It does not appear that the large number of passing lovers she may have had prevented her from finding a husband afterwards. Why then should she resist the influence of the climate, the seduction of example? The air we breathe, the songs, the dance almost always accompanied by lascivious postures, everything constantly recalls the sweetness of love, everything cries out to indulge in it. (...) This habit of living continuously in pleasure gives Tahitians a marked penchant for this sweet joke, the daughter of rest and joy. They also contract in the character a lightness which we were every day astonished. “

No history was so opposed by the institutions of the time as that of the good savage as recounted in the accounts of the great travelers. It was inconceivable that primitive people, generally friendly, could sometimes know more than us without the help of European philosophy, science and books including the *Bible*.

This finding is all the more disturbing as it implies the following question : What good then are so many philosophies and systems if the man of Nature, who can neither read nor write, who does not know Allah, nor God, nor Jesus, exceeds us in virtue? The poet began to speak of these people and of unknown lands with passion, the philosopher began to write on the natural rights of the natives who were also wanted and loved by God. Unfortunately, the greed of European man, the intransigence of God's servants, and the fear of the elites provided the “civilized” answer to the above-mentioned question. Distant populations were not mistaken when they encountered Europeans and their diabolical obsession with gold. For them, the white man personified the discovery of the devil, his direct expression.

“What reaches the earth also reaches the Sons of the earth. (...) If human beings spit on the earth, they spit on each other. (...) Everything that happens to animals will also happen to humans, very soon. (...) The white man, who temporarily has power, already believes that he is God - to whom the earth belongs. (...) Continue to dirty your bed, and one night you will suffocate in your waste. (...) For that we know - our God is the same God. This land is sacred to him. Even the white man will not escape this common fate. (From Chief Seattle's

1856 speech, quoted in The Washington Historical Quarterly 22, No. 4, October 1932.)

The intoxication of the discoveries of the terrestrial world has no limits. The land becomes the natural arena for metaphysical conflicts. Nature suffers the same fate, its “hostility” had to be dominated, its order fragmented, shelled. Gradually the triumph of philosophical rationalism and scientific mechanism is emerging, with the aim of confessing to destroying all the foundations of the animist philosophy of nature. The community ferment of the social cohesion of the first peoples disappears in favor of individualism.



“From 1666, the port of Nantes sent 108 slave ships to the coasts of Guinea, which embarked 37,340 Africans. In the French colonies, Louis XIV's sinister Code Noir framed slavery. He recognized in the owner of his plantation a power equivalent to that of the king in his kingdom - the power of life and death. The body is nothing or negligible quantity, a simple commodity that can be bought and sold on a slave market. (...) Slavery has been defined as “social death. If man is, as Aristotle says, a “political animal” (that is to say social), then to be a slave is to be in the eyes of others only a body, a dead man. who works. The body being only an object. » (Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Artist Meets With History*, 2001)

“We used their ignorance and inexperience to bend them more easily towards betrayal, lust and avarice and towards all kinds of inhumanity and cruelty, following the example and patron of our mores. Who ever put the service of commerce and traffic at such a price? So many cities razed to the ground, so many nations exterminated, so many millions of peoples cut to the edge of the sword, and the richest and beautiful part of the world upset by the negotiation of pearls and pepper! Mechanical victory. Never did ambition, never public enmities, urge men against one another to such horrible hostilities and so miserable calamities. “ (Montaigne - *Essays* Book III, ch.6)

The gods themselves can do nothing more for us. The world belongs to us, we have plundered it, humanized it. Decreation is not the end of the world but the end of our attachment to the world, of our break with nature via our decreations; as if we were in a state of mutiny against our origins, our genesis. Naturally, our world inexorably slides towards the artificial and degenerates. As if at the start of the third millennium we had irretrievably declared war on life itself.

We have overestimated the benefits of Western civilization and the ideology of progress. In a Unesco report (1997) Robin Clarke tells us that an American or European baby would consume twenty-five times more than an Indian baby in his life, i.e. one hundred million liters of water, 28 tons of steel and iron, 25

tons of paper, 10,000 bottles, 17,000 cans, 1,200 barrels of oil and will dump 128 tons of garbage. Lately at the colloquium on biodiversity in Paris (2005), we learned that if we wanted that, in fifty years, the ten billion inhabitants of the planet benefit from the current standard of living of the average Westerner, we would need roughly twelve additional planets.

Colonial body.

Social conditions keep on deteriorating while machines keep improving. Ironically, the XVIIIth and XIXth century, generations of European disgruntled overran the wilds of the world to escape industrialization and participated unwillingly in its development. These settlers, farmers, loggers, hunters, by supplying the metropolis with raw materials actually contributed to the eventual introduction of machinist culture in these virgin lands. Placed under the sign of envy, the colonial conquests will aim to seize territories and wealth without regard to the occupying populations; real genocide of indigenous populations.

In a few hundred years, from 1790 to 1890, America, Africa, the Asia of explorers and pioneers were again conquered by architects, engineers and industrialists. Romantic visions faded. In the steppes of Argentina and the prairies of North America, there were horses to be captured, bison to be killed, oil to be mined in Texas, gold to be found in California, Alaska and the Yukon, precious stones in Australia, diamonds in South Africa, rare woods, rubber to collect, rice, tea, cotton to transport and finally cod, salmon by thousands of tons to be caught in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the banks of Newfoundland and thousands of whales to be caught in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The white man spared no region on earth; as for the native predecessors, they were mocked, despoiled, exploited, often exterminated or enslaved, surely betrayed by bogus treaties based on “the honor of the given word.” The great fertile lands and forests were divided into concessions, the subsoil split into mining zones, the natives placed in “reserve”, the poets, painters, artists and their “unrealistic” visions discredited: the victory of the machine on man was total, irremediable.

The machine replaced all other sources of values, and the doctrine of progress tolerated no opponent. A new social order was being born dominated by a bourgeoisie composed of people of bad taste, without moral scruples, without general culture or elementary compassion. Only people who valued machines more than men were able to rule for their benefit. What Gauguin in Tahiti then in the Marquesas Islands bitterly realized; his escapades with the local Catholic and Protestant clergy to witness. Gauguin will no longer like what he has become in the image of colonized Tahiti; in both cases, he participated in their forfeiture. With the poems of Charles Baudelaire and the stories of Pierre Loti, the exotic begins to disenchant and the escapes become more and more cruel.

From the hierarchical classification of animals where man sits at the top (the chosen species), we move, following the discoveries of new continents and new peoples, to the notion of the chosen race. From Antiquity to the Middle Ages, on the edge of the known universe lived “monster peoples” who question their

belonging to humanity. Subsequently, during the Renaissance, the color of the skin became an essential criterion for classification. “If man becomes human only through his domination over beasts; the White retains his human whiteness only through his domination over people of color. » (Le Bras Chopard Armelle, *Le zoo des philosophes*)

Google-image / slaves

People of color are associated with domestic animals in the service of white Europe; in the age of machines, they become body-machines in the sole service of production. The oldest mode of domestication has always been slavery and the best way to keep the slave in his subhumanity is to bestialize him and above all, he must accept himself as such : an animal in the service of the colonizer.

White Christian democracy is not to be outdone and presents itself just as nihilistic. The French, whose racism against North Africans and Malagasy has reached disgusting dimensions. The Spaniards, who massacred with incredible brutality more than three quarters of the Indians of South America, the Dutch slavers who enslaved the local populations of South Africa, the Italians who, barely half a century ago , attacked with rare courage with poison gas one of the poorest countries of Africa, the English who enslaved and exploited almost half of the world, shot the Indian crowds repeatedly. The white Afrikaners who organized “native parties” where the game was replaced by black natives. Same phenomenon on the other side of the Atlantic where a Yankee general once declared “that a good Indian is a dead Indian.” “

With industrialization, the concept of body-machine will end up plaguing Western society where it applied to the proletariat. The animal therefore served as an instrument to justify inequality between men until the animalization of entire categories of populations, including women, the main victims of this male policy.

A whole colonial eroticism was built on the vision of the Maghreb or the mulatto to ignorant of Western taboos. The introduction of photography allowed a masification of images of oriental women, mainly Maghreb, African, Asian and everyone could have their international harem of lascivious female bodies on silver support. Each native woman or young impubescent boy is thus likely to satisfy the Westerner in need of heat while the body of the native male shows his muscular strength, object of exploitation. “The presentation of the naked body of” primitive “peoples was often an” ersatz “of pornography” (JF Thiel) ; “The first photographs brought back from Africa had the character of a trophy,” a subtle (or sublime) taking of possession “ (A. Krauter) ; etc. The colonial body is a prostituted, stereotypical body linked to male domination which the Westerner can abuse.

Fairs and other world exhibitions are arguably the most emblematic forms of sexuality as a market value and of the staging of primitivism or savagery to attract public attention. The colonial exhibition of 1931 in Paris attracted more than 30 million visitors.

The ethnological discourse which accompanies the exhibitions and the colonial and imperialist projects is identical everywhere in the Western world. Thus Ota Benga, a Pygmy exhibited at the Saint-Louis fair in 1904, was locked up in 1906 at the Bronx zoo, in the same cage as an orangutan. Ota Benga is undoubtedly the incarnation as much as the victim of this phenomenon which reinforces the ideology which allows the establishment of segregation

During the Johannesburg Empire Exhibition in 1936, one of the highlights was an exhibition of a reconstituted Bushman camp which attracted more than half a million visitors, permanently fixing the perception pattern of endangered races. Ambiguous success of ethnological show business based on nostalgic lamentations that have no other effect than placing the Bushman at the center of an ideological device to justify segregation while silencing all social concerns (poverty, landlessness, etc.). Here again, as in the American case, the ethnological exhibitions are as much part of planetary cultural changes as they are in a local ideological context, the good Bushman playing the role of imperialism's "human trophy". (Lindfors, Bernth, Africans on Stage, 1999)

What to say finally of these theories which apprehended the human race "scientifically" like any animal population and with the help of animal species, if not that the animal did not gain anything and the man even less. All animals, we were at the beginning according to Darwinian theories, but in the end today, there is no longer either animal or man : "like all animals, we are machines created by our genes. " (Tennyson) This is the concept of body-machine that wins hands down on all others.

The tragic body.

"Oh how sad this world is, how sad there is no such thing as there is no world. " (Trakl)

Expressionism is the cry of solitary men in this "rotten West" by machinist civilization. Ancestors, let's name Munch, Ensor, Nolde but also a fascination for Rimbaud, Hölderlin, Nietzsche and Dostoevski. Profound transformations are shaking Europe, brutal industrialization and the rural exodus make cities grow in a dazzling way with its cohorts of unemployed. Everything becomes problematic: the technique is scary, the administration scares, hatred scares. Flee cursed civilization like their contemporary Gauguin and Rimbaud before.

The sociologist Le Rider noted that the end of the XIX^E century corresponds to the appearance of "the chronic crisis of identity", questions of identity of expressionist artists which will subsequently win over all individuals, a movement which spanned the entire century. next until today. Feelings such as inner turmoil, anguish, guilt, agony, distress will be used to talk about the decline of a dying society and to describe personal unease and civilizing failure since classical Greece. The quest for oneself staging personal dilemmas in the face of the ambient cacophony is at the heart of the process of individuation underway. Nietzsche spoke of a "wild existential anger" that crossed all the artistic revolution of the XXth century.

The desire for revolution giving new meaning to life materialized in the "passion to be oneself." The mood of the time is anarchy. It begins with Fichte and the German romantics, with the affirmation of an autonomous subject and absolutely free to self-create: "With the free being, conscious of oneself, a whole world appears at the same time from nothingness. The historian Hubert van den Berg first reminds us that in Europe, at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, anarchism was a powerful political current which competed with the social democratic parties. . The writings of anarchists enjoyed an important audience in European intellectual circles. There was therefore a climate conducive to the emergence of a new movement which would inseparably combine political revolt and artistic expression of a new order.

It is in this social and political atmosphere that the protest against the expressionist movement arises. The links between expressionists and anarchists were numerous. It should be noted from the outset that German Expressionism was never a school like French Symbolism or a structured group like Italian Futurism or Russian Constructivism. Expressionism is an idealistic, romantic movement that served as an energy catalyst for a youth in turmoil fighting the chaotic brutality of the world.

Expressionism is above all a contestation of the world carried by common themes as much in painting, theater, literature as in poetry centered around the urban man petrified in frightening cities where the craziest despair arouses an irrational hope. imbued with idealism and mysticism embodied in anarchy.

Without God or master, expressionism is above all an attitude of revolt, the cry (Munch) of despair of a whole youth living in the "cancer huts" that the cities have become. "Sick dwellings" (Wolfenstein), "evil city" (Salus), "sprawling cities" (Verhaeren). Cities are the bloody theater of the contemporary apocalypse. The cities driven by savage liberalism and unrestrained industrialization offer the morbid spectacle of dilapidated districts with canals carrying refuse of all kinds where rotting human rags breathing the stale air of fireplaces spewing ash and death ; madness prowls everywhere.



Man becomes responsible for social decadence signs of his inner and existential ugliness. Expressionist artists were able to grasp the absurdity of our existence;

they participated in his despair. Like hallucinated poets with lyrical and incantatory pathos, they did not hesitate to represent the dramas of life and to express their pain in their work. Pacifism is one of the major themes of expressionist artists and poets. All of them sensed the First World War as a real apocalypse, the collapse of European culture into barbarism. This foreboding is linked to the awareness of decline and death and finds its release in the expectation of a new man; the deepest despair rubs shoulders with the highest messianism. From a palette of colors in violent contrasts emerge helpless human figures linked to the social tensions of the time. At the same time, synchronicity obliges, Sigmund Freud deepens, in the isolation of his office, the analysis of the neuroses that he observes in his patients like the expressionist paintings. Both expressionism and Freudian psychoanalysis highlighted the role of human impulses, mainly the death instinct heralding the incredible violence of the two world wars.

The survivors will divide. For several artists, the intoxication of the “disturbance of the senses” was quickly followed by depression and existential doubt, some will go towards socialism or pacifism while others, dreaming of new men, will give their support to the messianic visions of fascism, of Nazism and Communism. The most intransigent poured into anarchy and declared war on this rotten civilization which allowed such butchery and many sank into mysticism. This “lost generation” was also lost in Dada nihilism. Sensing the confusion of beings and the noise of boots announcing another great butchery war, artists, painters, writers presenting themselves as “primitive mercenaries in the modern world” howled in vain like wolves before disappearing crushed by stupidity and hatred.

The “expressionist” spirit of destruction of the old order gained more and more ground. The first exhibition of the “Fauves” in Paris caused a scandal, just like the cubist deconstructions of the human figure by Picasso associated with atonal music by Schoenberg, a real revolution in the history of music by proposing to replace the seven notes of the scale by twelve semitones. His musical system called “dodecaphonism” introduces an equally radical break for Western thought as pictorial abstraction and quantum equations. A new world was to emerge from the ruins of the old.

Destroy, deconstruct, put an end to the backward-looking order of ruins and decadent museums; even the present has value only because it is a necessary step to reach the goal. New century, new technology, new civilization, new city, social novelty of the urban masses, for the first time, the mechanical order becomes the ideology of the “new Jerusalem.” “

Industrial expansion, the exploration of new markets, the exploitation of colonial resources, panacea to heal the wounds of the 14-18 war, sow the tragic euphoria of overproduction with the consequence of the stock market crash of 1929. The “crowds without God” (Camus) invaded the towns. All the relationships of neighborhood, solidarity, family cohesion, fundamental values ??of the rural world, shattered into a thousand crumbs with the advent of mass society in metropolises with failing and often inadequate structures. Industrialization and the economy in general have difficulty absorbing this large flow of under-

privileged people wandering in the cities like “shadows without love who dragged themselves on the ground...” (Apollinaire)

Psychological anxiety and financial uncertainty generate frustrations resulting in increasingly anarchic disorders. Threatened in his identity by the too rapid massification, the man, psychically broken down, sees his life opening up to emptiness and the dreaded nothingness. Nihilism is gaining ground with its share of famines and uncontrollable conflicts. Man discovers a solitary self ready for anything. The individualism of each for himself mobilizes the interior revolt of the wounded being while the apprehended insurrection against order, duty, work and authority looms.

The work of Belgian James Ensor with his skeletons and morbid masks denounced the anguish of life and announced the crumbling if not the collapse of Western civilization blinded by technicism. This nightmarish atmosphere of the man enslaved to industrialization also found an echo in the Norwegian Edvard Munch with his characters of panicked men, sick children and other cripples. We will also talk about the violent barbarism of Nolde painting men carried away by the powers of chaos expressing their animal anger without forgetting the tortuous eroticism of Schiele expressing the suffering and the fragility of being since “life is only a journey towards death. “

Google-image / Munch, Ensor, Nolde, Schiele

Futuristic body.

With the cubist revolution the body goes through a crisis of representation. To the natural vision of man, Picasso and Braque opposed the principle of Cézanne which commands “to treat nature by the sphere, the cylinder and the cone” and increased the scope Pictorial geometry experimented with the symbolic fusion with the organic ; such is cubism. The body and its organs are dismantled like so many mechanical parts and brought together in abstract forms as if the painter readjusted the organic



functions like a mechanic making an adjustment. Cubist bodies and objects deconstructed into juxtaposed segments offer an asymmetrical vision of a discontinuous world, without family ties, where tension, ambiguity, contrast and controversy creep in, prefiguring the First World War.

The visual effect coming from the mechanical repetition and the mass-produced object led the artist to conceive a particular aesthetic of new forms appreciated as symbols of progress. Cubist bodies deconstructed into juxtaposed segments offer the asymmetrical vision of a body-machine (Descartes), assembly of spare parts in a discontinuous world, Italian futurism glorifies the movement and speed of mechanized objects, Suprematism celebrates the victory of the man on nature, abstract thought on reality, while Russian constructivism ennobles the machine as an icon of a new world.

Fernand Léger is the one who best observed Cézanne's principle by applying it to the technical world. The geometrization of cubist forms are reinterpreted, split up to suggest the dynamism of the mechanical universe. Fascinated by functionality and technical precision, he designs machine bodies made of tubes and levers integrated in spite of themselves as extras in an artificial setting. Léger is obsessed with the communist vision of a classless world, of a workers' world functioning like a well-oiled machine.

“The machine breeds beauty. “(Futuristic slogan)

The industrial art embodied by the futurist movement is an open war against the institutional immobility of bourgeois society. This ode to the machine was taken up by all those who imagined a mystique of the new man transfigured by a “total art” of the civilization to come singing the glory of machinery and of the industrial object as the foundation of the new universal city. The same year 1909, Marinetti published *Malarka le futuriste* where the artist finally delivers his prophetic vision of a mechanical and winged superman. This Icarian man-god is at the heart of the futuristic cosmogony where the body is fantasized as the “glorious body” of the mystical machinist and driven by her desire to exalt industrial progress. It was in 1910, in the review *La Demolizione* that he *delivered* his sermon on the new religion of violence, the only one capable of preventing Italy from sinking into “lazy egoism (of the proletariat) , economic (of liberalism), in the miserliness of the mind (anarchism) and of the will. (democracy) . » (The words in parenthesis are ours)

Advocating a violent revolt, artistic and political against the triumphant bourgeoisie of the early twentiethth century, futurist artists will discover a revolutionary social function and weave aesthetic frame of unprecedented collaboration between art and politics. The improvement of the machine became a duty: the duty to invent.

It was in 1909, in France, on the front page of the newspaper *Le Figaro* that the *Manifeste du Futurisme* was published . Its author, Filippo Tomasso Marinetti, makes eleven proposals that express much more of a state of mind than a base of unshakeable rules. Among these we find the love of the machine, revolt, admiration and of course what will characterize futurism more than any-

thing else: movement, speed, and conceptions of very advanced forms of civilization, making appeal to wars, revolutions, and the energy of the masses. Energy, dynamism, speed, power, vitality, so many attributes expressing a new scale of cultural values ??focused on youth.

“By renouncing a large part of his humanity, man could arrive at divinity. He emerged from this second chaos and created the machine in his image: the image of power, but torn from his flesh and isolated from his humanity. “ (Mumford, *Technique et civilization*, 1950, p. 55)

Here is therefore part of the *Manifesto of Futurism* as composed by Marinetti and published on February 20, 1909 in *Le Figaro* :

- 1- We want to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and recklessness.
 - 2- The essential elements of our poetry will be courage, daring and revolt.
 - 3- Literature having so far magnified thoughtful immobility, ecstasy and sleep, we want to exalt aggressive movement, feverish insomnia, gymnastic step, somersault, slap and punch.
 - 4- We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched with a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car with its trunk adorned with big pipes like snakes with explosive breath... a roaring car, which seems to run on grape, is more beautiful than the “victory of Samothrace”.
 - 5- We want to sing about the man who holds the steering wheel, whose ideal rod crosses the earth, launched itself on the circuit of its orbit.
 - 6- The poet must spend himself with warmth, brilliance and lavishness, to increase the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.
 - 7- There is no more beauty than in the struggle. No masterpiece without an aggressive character. Poetry must be a violent assault on unknown forces, to summon them to lie down before man.
 - 8- We are on the extreme promontory of the centuries! ... What is the use of looking behind us, as long as we have to smash down the mysterious doors of the impossible? Time and space died yesterday. We are already living in the absolute, since we have already created the eternal omnipresent speed.
 - 9- We want to glorify war - the only hygiene in the world -, militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of the anarchists, the beautiful ideas that kill and... contempt for women...
 - 10- We want to demolish museums, libraries, fight moralism, feminism and all opportunist and utilitarian cowardice.
 - 11- We will sing about the large crowds agitated by work, pleasure or revolt: the multicolored and polyphonic waves of revolutions in modern capitals; the nocturnal vibration of arsenals and construction sites under their violent electric moons; the gluttonous stations swallowing smoky snakes; the factories suspended from the clouds by the strings of their smoke; bridges with gymnastic leaps thrown over the diabolical cutlery of sunny rivers; the adventurous liners scenting the horizon; the large-chested locomotives pawing on the rails like huge steel horses bridled with long pipes, and the slippery flight of airplanes, whose propellers flap the flag and applause from an enthusiastic crowd. (...)
- Standing on the top of the world, we once again challenge the stars. “

Under the pretext of revolt against the backward-looking culture, the art of the

XXth century, became propaganda, also revealed perverse justification of the power system by acclimatizing the modern man to future environments of mégatechnologie it either capitalist or communist. Fritz Lang in the film *Metropolis* brilliantly denounces the hyperstructured reality of man, of the worker emptied of all his vital substance by the megamachine, but at the same time, he presents his future to him as a programmed reality. As if the whole apparatus of life became a mega-complex of production, distribution, consumption so specialized and so subdivided that the individual can no longer find his way around, lost in the labyrinth of his own life, at the mercy of forces that they no longer control, on their way to a direction he ignores. *The era of the masses* has just been born.

Google-image / Marinetti

Faced with the artistic jumble of the various avant-gardes, from cubico-futurism to suprematism, technicism appeared more and more as the only regulatory model capable of restoring order. This transformation went through the way of life, through everyday life, through everything related to habits of living and thinking, to aesthetic tastes. It was necessary to break a tribal mentality, resistant to the changes brought about by urbanization, science and technology. It was in Russia that Futurism found an unprecedented consecration. Revolutionary Russia unreservedly adopted the art of building a new world integrating the machined works of a new society living in new cities. Because “building” took on its full meaning in a poor and rural country where the civil war, since 1880, had worsened a housing crisis. The revolution needed to invent a new way of life, in new towns for the emancipation of the new man with a global vision of a total break with the old world. And the machine will be a liberating force. *The Constructivist Manifesto* by Alexei Gan (1920) proclaimed the glory of technology against the speculative activity of art. Its slogan “Art is dead! Long live the art of the machine” clearly indicates the purpose of the movement.

Google-image / constructivism

Thus theorists, architects, designers of industrial objects, photographers, painters and sculptors concretely undertook to change mentalities and the living environment. The pride of the proletariat was to be concretely visualized in healthy housing, in working-class housing estates that guaranteed order and morality.

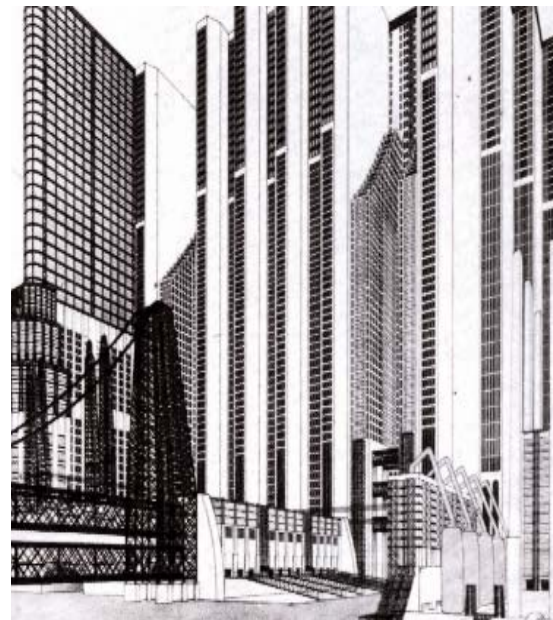


True apostles of community life, they explored the technical possibilities offered through personal experiences leading to reconciling man and machine, industrial work and personal creativity in order to achieve the radiant communist future freed from the yoke of exploitation.

Not only will machinery transform nature, but man “will build a new world belonging to him alone”: a new materialist messianism has just been born and this spectacle could not leave political power abroad indifferent. Along with functionalism and constructivism, the metaphysical coup d’état of the demiurge man was expressed in the possibilities offered by the exponential growth of technology while a reforming and social ambition that was almost religious was asserted through art, in the west (constructivism, productivism, socialist realism) as in the east (futurism, functionalism, pop art). Capitalism and Communism are obsessed with the machinist conquest.

Google-image / functionalism

This desire to build a new world attracted artists from all backgrounds around schools or movements like *Vkhutemas* (Russia), the *De Stijl* (Holland), the *new spirit* (France) and of course the *Bauhaus* (Germany). Inspired by Russian constructivists, German architects grouped around Walter Gropius, in search of a new art of living, are also trying to revolutionize useful forms to renew the urban decor and above all respond to the lack of housing for workers. To do this, he proposed the mass production of prefabricated housing by standardized production.



Functional rigor implies the stripping down to the austerity of forms in clear opposition to the ornamental naturalism of Art Nouveau. Who says function, thinks efficiency, observation applied by futurist architects. It is the conquest of space through concrete and steel and the conquest of transparency through glass. These new materials of course celebrate the reconciliation of man with technology.

Functional rationalism in art, mainly in architecture and town planning will have its article of law : “Is functional what functions as a repetitive and determined mechanism with the aim of harmonizing the elements of a system and directing towards the same efficient goal. So community life in the new city for a new man must integrate notions of biology, sociology, economics, technology and of course, statistics. Integrating and coordinating is the fundamental idea of

??functionalism.

Any structure, as well as society in general, must achieve its highest degree of efficiency. The study of animal behavior and social Darwinism introduce the vision of a disciplined human society like a hive of bees where each performs its function for the common good. Anything that is not essential should be eliminated. Totalitarianism is pointing its nose. The purification proposed by revolutionary avant-garde architectures was quickly diverted by Stalin and Hitler for whom the purity of the proletariat for one, the purity of the race for the other demanded monumental works to measure, rather expressing the excess of their demiurgic ambition.

From this schema of thought are born utopian cities, *Metropolis* style which no longer fit into a natural environment but downright artificial like a pure artefact in the image of the man-god, Promethean. Inspired by the experiences of Russian constructivists, Western architecture also adheres to the utopian principle of a new city for a new man supported by a spirit of social solidarity and a common egalitarian morality. (Edina Bernard, *Modern Art*, p.9-85)

The glass skyscrapers reveal a mystique of transparency dispensing a new light, capped with radio antennas delivering the messages of the new messianic gospel of urbanized man, of which the *Rockefeller Center* in New York represents the exemplary scenography.

Mutilated body.

On June 28, 1914, the Archduke of Austria was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serbian nationalist and four weeks later, a generalized conflict broke out. On 28 July, Austria declared war on Serbia on 30, Russia ordered general mobilization followed by Austria and Hungary on 31. 1st August, Germany declared war on Russia, the 3 to France. England united to France by the Entente Cordiale signed in 1904, in turn, entered the war. On the 5th, Austria declared war on Russia and on the 12th, France and England declared war on Austria. Italy, though allied with Austria and England, remained neutral to the surprise of the great powers. The “Great War” has just started.



War is violent bodies that violate other bodies, game hunted without dignity. Several million men are either dead or injured. Clouds of poison gas darkened the luminous sky of civilization. According to Churchill, then Secretary of State for War, “neither a truce nor a negotiation mitigated the armed fighting. The wounded on the front died between the lines; the dead were amalgamated on the ground. Merchant ships, neutral ships and hospital ships were sunk and their crews abandoned to their fate on the seas or killed while afloat. Every effort was made to starve entire nations, regardless of age or sex, the better to submit them. Monuments in towns were “riddled” with artillery. The aerial bombardments were carried out indiscriminately. Poisonous gases - of various

types - suffocated or burned the soldiers. Liquid fire was projected on their bodies. Some fell in torches or were slowly suffocated in the black chasms of the sea. “

These beings lost in the battlefield experience are portrayed by Hemingway as “desperate” “who have nothing to lose”, “completely brutalized.” The civilians were not spared : famine, deportations, exodus, strategic bombardments increase the number of “broken faces”, these mutilated faces were the central subject of the post-war works of German painter Otto Dix.

Google-image / Otto Dix

Since the First World War, mental injuries are now omnipresent. Modern combat is no longer only of a physical nature but exceeds in intensity the psychic capacities of adaptation. Terror and trauma transform the combat experience into a degrading ordeal; the body of the once heroic warrior is reduced to the status of meat, the battlefield a slaughterhouse where they are butchered. To which can be added the humiliation of physical and mental handicaps during the return to normal life and the lack of recognition from fellow citizens. A dull rage settles in the minds of the survivors who discover after the fact that war is a disgusting absurdity.

The post-war period marked a return to realism as if painters could no longer shirk their responsibility in the face of this butchery. An immense disillusion takes hold of the spirits. Otto Dix’s war paintings and the loneliness of the dehumanized man painted by Grosz are all themes that confirm the appearance of man petrified in the face of horror.

Google-image / Grosz

Google-image / German expressionism

These so-called expressionist painters became nihilists who lived in their souls and in their skin the torments of programmed annihilation. This exposure of the human soul finds its abyss in *The Night* by Max Bechmann, a cruel painting, a hodgepodge of tortures, rapes, hangings, which draws up the appalling vision of man struggling with the demonic forces of destruction that inhabit, a veritable theater of contemporary cruelty, the same dance of death, still present today, in Darfur, Rwanda and Somalia. Executioners and victims give the vision of the confinement of man on himself; the human falls towards the sub-human.

Google-image / Max Bechmann / the night

“Art needs an operation. “(Tzara)

“I am against all systems, the most acceptable system is having none. “ (Tzara) Dada means nothing, a radical expression of nihilism that Nietzsche revealed to us as” evil of the century. Dada is the demonstration and the scandal without wanting to mean anything, Dada is the absurdity. Dada tends towards the absolute end of the world but also plays on the liquidation of past history: “I don’t even want to know if there were men before me. “

Even before the First World War, it was obvious that the Enlightenment would succeed that of darkness. Very few people understood then - are there many today? - that Dadaism is not art but its opposite: it is the negation of art or rather "the art of the destruction of art." Dada thus casts a mortal gaze like Rimbaud before, on the system of "art" and "civilization." Art reflects the same ideology that leads to war and destruction; the only art that really holds up is "the art of war." "Dada is extremist expressionism advocating a return to archaic primitivism from before civilization or according to Hans Arp" the word Dada symbolizes the primitive relationship with the surrounding reality. The German Baader never ceased to proclaim this profession of faith: "it is by returning to the primitivity of life, prior to all social foundations, that man will be liberated. Nourished by reading the great insurgents of history: Sade, Nietzsche, Lautréamont, Rimbaud, the spirit of subversion also developed a taste for black and blasphemous humor, for the grotesque; the figure of Ubu, created by Alfred Jarry, became for many emblematic.



"For Dada, it is a question of getting rid of all the political, social, cultural and artistic traditions of the West which, according to them, ended in the war of 1914-1918. It's about denying everything, Dada is against the past but he also denies the future. Dada will also make fun of any human activity and the feelings that engender it, the machine (Picabia), society (Grosz), art (Schwitters). » (Serge Lemoyne, Les avant-gardes, Dada, p.80)

And the poet Aragon wrote in 1920, during his Dada period:

"More paintings, more sculptures, more writers, more religions, more republics, more royalism, more imperialism, more socialism, more politics, more protectors, more aristocrats, more 'money, no more police, no more fatherland, enough of this imbecility, nothing, nothing, nothing ..."

Dada advocated self-exclusion from a useless society. To do this nothing better than to cause scandal. Parodying with particular cruelty the spectacle of faces mutilated by the bombardments, the Dadaists dressed themselves in grotesque masks, hung shells from their ears, wore hideous masks while declaiming absurd poems and vociferating insults to the bourgeois; everything to excite the nerves and provoke brawls. By mimicking the rituals of primitive culture, Dada in fact discredits all the peoples from which it is inspired. Because beyond primitivism / spectacle hides a very different and very modern reality : nihilism.

Dada is marked with the seal of despair is black bile poetry, exactly what Nietzsche had predicted: nihilism is the drama of the XXth century, one of the last man, Dada confirmed.

Nietzsche and Dada have been the true visionaries of the XXth century. If the success of the ideologies of hatred and of the "every man for himself" has grown to the point of delirium tremens, it is not by chance: the absurdity of the "superman" is starting to become a political problem.

"What about the Superman really? (...) The one who despises the populace and is counted among the physical and intellectual elite, among the distinguished people, the aristocrats, the privileged? Merciless towards himself, does he not seek to root out what represents the golden mean, and to cultivate harshness and cruelty? Like a beast of prey whose motto would be "Live dangerously", does it not pursue its own interest, without regard to the victims, having for sole aim to increase its power, which is useful for life, which is profitable to domination? (...) This type of man is only too well known, whose "interpersonal relationships are rarefied even in their private life, determined by functional and utilitarian values, governed by interests of power: everywhere the weak are the weak. victim of the stronger, of the superior man, of the less scrupulous man. The horizon of meaning has effectively disappeared, as have the ultimate values, the obligatory norms, the acceptable models, the absolute truth. In reality, is it not a nihilism of values ??which now determines human behavior? What Nietzsche, more lucid than many others, had foreseen, did not it happen? (Küng, Does God Exist?, 1981)

New body

In *The Descent of Man*, then in a sequel, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), Darwin pushed evolutionary logic very far. He thus lays the theoretical foundations of what has been called "social Darwinism", "according to which human society is governed by the same laws of selection as the rest of nature and, in particular, as commercial competition, colonialism, and the extermination of certain "races" only translate the "natural" triumph of the strongest over the weakest. "

The main representative of social Darwinism is the Englishman Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)



"Social Darwinism affirms that competition, the struggle for life, affects, within the human species, the different social groups that make it up (family, ethnic, state) in such a way that hierarchies are created, which are the result of a social selection which allows the best to win. However, for Spencer, all social groups being in competition with each other, anything that can weaken a social group benefits its competitors. Consequently, Spencer thinks that any artificial protection of the weak is a handicap for the social group to which they belong, insofar as this protection has the effect of making the functioning of the group more difficult and, therefore, of placing it in a position of inferiority. against rival social groups. " (Denis Touret)

It is the whole ideology of the grasshopper and the ant that is taking shape. Spencer shares a liberal, anti-state conception of economics. He is hostile to poverty laws, public education, public health, family protections. As a rule, this theory is opposed by the powerful, to the egalitarian or social democratic wishes of the middle class and the excluded. It can serve as a support for both liberal and above all ultraliberal theories as well as conservative or totalitarian theories.

Social Darwinism will become an essential component of Italian fascism and German Nazism. Mussolini recruited members of the fascist brigades from among the soldiers, students, young workers and the unemployed. Across Europe a huge cohort of citizens frustrated in their desire for heroic feats only asked to serve a noble cause. The *Blackshirts* fascist Mussolini, the *brown shirts* of Nazi Hitler, the *Phalange* Spanish General Franco, the *Arrow Cross* in Hungary, the *Iron Guard* in Romania showered their wish unfulfilled. All these ultra nationalist movements prophesied on the ruins of the First War the mythical advent of a decisive victory over the forces of evil and disorder. Because the fascist elite requires noble qualities present in all classes of society. It is the mental predispositions, strengths of character and leadership that take precedence over basely socio-economic considerations. Anyone who feels capable of governing society can be part of this elite under the law of natural selection.

With the firm belief that Darwinian evolution was true, Hitler saw himself as the modern savior of mankind. Here it is genetics which functions as the Gospel, it is the tragic recovery of religion by science for the benefit of a messianic project :

“If there is one divine command that I can accept, it is this : ‘You will keep the species.’ “(Hitler)

Hitler believed that humans were animals to which the laws of genetics observed in cattle ranching could be applied, thus joining the Nietzschean view of the superman. Hitler was certain that the “bad blood” of the inferior races contaminated the Aryan race.

“Hitler was influenced above all by the theories of nineteenth-century Social Darwinism, whose conception of man as biological matter was guided by his impulses towards an organized society. He was convinced that the race was disintegrating and deteriorating because of bad marriages resulting from a promiscuity tinged with liberality that stained the blood of the nation. And this has led to the establishment of a catalog of ‘positive’ curative measures: racial hygiene, a eugenic choice of mate, the breeding of human beings by methods of selection on the one hand and extirpation. the other. Hitler’s efforts to put members of



these inferior races into concentration camps were less a desire to punish than a desire to protect the healthy community, as it is customary to quarantine sick people. According to Haas, the Nazis believed that “killing Jews and others was in fact a scientific and rational way of serving a higher objective good. (Jerry Bergman, translated by Ketsia Lessard, Darwinism and the Nazi Holocaust, <http://www.trueorigin.org/holocaust.as> p)

It is characteristic to note that all messianic movements are based on a purification of society. Hitlerism, Stalinism and Maoism do not escape the rule in their mission to erase all the social faults of the past and generate a new man.

Propaganda body.

“The greatest progress of modern civilization is to have produced beings capable of supporting it. “

Since ancient Greece, the concepts of exercise, gymnastics, sport have been part of personal hygiene : *mens sana in corpore sano* . Individual sports such as



tennis, golf, cycling give preponderance to skill, elegance of movement, endurance. However, the individual sports most influenced by the new mechanical vision are palaestra sports such as gymnastics and weightlifting. The arrival of musculation apparatus, of extensors propels the idea that the body can improve itself by developing its strength, its resistance like boxing, mixture of brute force, primitive and sophistication; the instinct of the tribal killer allied to the nobility of the medieval knight. In this way, the racial superiority is highlighted, which will give the motherland children worthy of them. School gymnastics instills in both the individual and society the order and discipline necessary for its proper functioning. Gymnastics is to the cultivation of the body (bodybuilding) what teaching is to the training of the mind.

What was previously associated with leisure, relaxation, individual emancipation becomes in the midst of the industrial revolution synonymous with performance, records, the myth of a future cultivating moral and physical health.

Around the 1930s, the recruitment of bodily activities for the purposes of ideological propaganda appeared. The philosophical concept of the new man inspired by Nietzsche’s superman must embody the strength and the glorious destiny of the people in the body of the citizen.

The functionalist model will give precedence to team sports because the team players form a collective body like a well-oiled machine in the same way as the army whose victories are to be used for the benefit of the nation. Voluntary physical activity becomes competitive sport. Loyalty (never let his own down), commitment (defending every inch of patriotic soil), self-sacrifice (suffering to win), intelligence (thwarting opposing strategies) are values that are present and necessary as much on the battlefields as in the stages of rugby. It is this new man who takes his place on patriotic posters and in political ideology throughout the West.

The athletes become the heroes of modern mythologies, the spectacle takes over sport, the masses invade the stadiums. The stadium became the focal point of popular culture and the ideals of national identity. Sport becomes a political issue and therefore an object of propaganda. In 1936 at the Berlin Games, German athletes proudly wear Nazi insignia and Italian athletes parade with the fascist salute.

Milan Kundera, in his novel *Immortality*, called “imagology,” the creation of a system of ideals that influences our behavior, our political opinions, our religious faith and our aesthetic tastes. The dissemination of this new aesthetic culture commands “a clan war cry” : the slogan.

“Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer” (Hitler’s slogan justifying the invasion of Austria in 1939)

“The slogan has a function, which is to persuade the masses, to make them buy, to make them vote, to make them believe. And its nature follows directly from its function. »(Reboul, in *Art et Publicité*, 1990, p.88)

Of Gaelic origin, slogan comes from *Sluagh-ghairm* meaning “clan war cry. The English adopted it as an electoral slogan for a party and the Americans added the function of commercial currency to it.

“Despite the labels, since 1930, art, under all regimes, in all countries, has become confused with propaganda. » (Conio, *Art against the masses*, 2003)

From now on, the artist can only work on the building and glorification of communism (Russia, China), Nazism (Germany), fascism (Italy), liberalism (England-USA) ; further reinforcing the tendencies of the subjugation of art to the demands of politics: No art outside the state.

Art is henceforth called, no longer to represent but to change humanity. This transformation goes through the way of life, through everyday life, through everything related to habits of living and thinking, to aesthetic tastes. Propaganda will never leave the realm of art: propaganda of the patrons, of the merchant elites, of the industrial revolution and proletarian propaganda of the Bolshevik revolution, propaganda of the democracies, of the dictatorships and, finally, of the commercial propaganda.

Model body.

“It is a matter of making man as useful as possible and of conforming him as exactly as possible to the infallible machine, he must be endowed with the virtues of the machine - he must learn to feel as ideal conditions those in which he achieves a mechanical and useful work ... “(Nietzsche)

These prophetic words were staged by none other than the great American realist painter Hopper (1920) for whom the composition of the painting is part of a tight geometrization of the space where gloomy figures deprived of life and expression evolve, who have integrated the ideal conditions for mechanical work.

In Hopper’s canvases, the city body is losing energy, frozen, subjected to slow psychological degradation. Partitioned in their offices like mute irremovable puppets, Hopper also erases the essential features of the human figure from his characters. The functional architecture of cities and workplaces imprints a strict configuration, the geometric representation of which illustrates alienation. Deleuze has clearly demonstrated : “the living environment prints the limits prior to the existence of the bodies whose essence they determine. The spatiality of the urban environment in Hopper’s paintings inevitably reflects a negation of life that sticks to the body by imprinting stereotypical postures on it.

“Almost all utopias emphasize regularity, uniformity, ‘dirigisme’ or authoritarianism, isolation and autarky. Not least, they emphasize hostility to nature, which leads to the suppression of the natural environment by means of geometric or mechanical shapes, as well as the replacement of natural products with artificial substitutes and manufacturers. » (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine*, 1974, T.II, p.284)

“Where the properties of space best perform their negative work is in professional activities. Hopper spares no one in this matter: maid, hairdresser, cinema opener, secretary, office worker, are subject to the mechanical regime of work, which combines both a high degree of repetition and an absence of creation. In these professions, in fact, the repeated gesture and the monotony of the work are two essential points. Each time, the man or the woman are enslaved to a task which never differs from itself, which is only repetition of the same; that is to say, which generates by repetition the insignificant void and the absence of meaning. This is undoubtedly the objective sought by Hopper: the emptiness of the modern world, its radical lack of meaning. » (Eric Beauron, *Space, automata and plants* (Hopper II) <http://www.lampe-tempe.fr/Hopper2.htm>)

Google-image / Hopper

It falls to Thomas More in *Utopia* to have introduced into modernity the ideas of Plato declaring that the human community could be deliberately shaped by rational ideas and methods. Society as a work of art created by man asks only to improve, to become better. The utopia of an ideal society operating according to the naturalistic model of ant colonies and beehives can only be realized under the direction of a collective dictatorship of the machinist type. Even outside of his working hours, the average employee is little more than a

tiny cog in a huge social mechanism: he “ thinks the thoughts of his superiors.” ” (Henrik Ibsen) Necessity and habit are the laws of his conduct. It begins in the morning when he gets up in his suburban house and uses, according to an immutable rite, each of the minutes which he has carefully regulated the use until the departure of his train or his daily tram. And it ends in the evening when he reads the same newspaper or listens to the same radio program as millions of his peers. It is the entire social machine which, like a giant steamroller, crushes and standardizes its personal way of life and standardizes it itself as if it were the product of a huge invisible machine. We can't even say that we have to go to factories to see robots : we only need to imagine for a moment the framework in which the life of the modern city dweller takes place to conclude that we are all robots in some capacity.



His conscious personality is then, so to speak, covered by a collective subconscious soul. The critical sense disappears at the same time and there is a return to a more primitive stage of intellectual evolution. One of the triumphs of modern technology is the creation of an invisible crowd or mass by means of advertising and propaganda. (from Man, Thomas, Era of the masses, http://www.uqac.ca/Classiques_des_sciences_sociales/ , 2005)

The figures of sculptor George Segal captured in prosaic gestures are the symbols of a mass society whose main characteristic is the tendency to immobility and conservation. These sculptures are by no means individualized portraits. Rather, they embody generalized caricatures of the modern world that have sometimes been compared to the paintings of Edward Hopper. Figures frozen in their movements never illustrate a fateful moment, of crisis or conflict. The artist simply shows us daily life and its routine, there is nothing creative in the group.

Google-image / George Segal

Glamorous body.

Since the statuary of the mother goddesses of the Neolithic era, feminine aesthetics have become rare. Throughout Antiquity, the “fair sex” is male. In Greece, virile physical perfection is valued, female nudes are rare and belong to the late era. Praxilene's shameless Aphrodite even caused a scandal. The feminine beauty in the Middle Ages was discredited except of course that of the Virgin. The aesthetic supremacy of woman over man, let us think of Botticelli's *Venus* , is really an invention of the Renaissance. So much so that the men do not hesitate to use perfume, to



powder their faces, even adopt more mannered costumes than those of the ladies of the course. The French Revolution put an end to the effeminate man and the ostentatious pomp of the aristocracy.

Substituting the realistic nude for idealized Greco-Roman images as well as Renaissance models, *Venus with a Mirror* (1648) by Velasquez is the first painting in which scandal occurs. This first profane nude emphasizes the buttocks no longer strictly anatomical but above all erotic.

Google-image / Velasquez Venus in the Mirror

The aristocracy in lack of exoticism revel in naughty books, think of the Indian Kama-Sutra, brought back from distant lands and inspire writers like Zola, Flaubert and their descriptions of desiring body and suggestive postures; the famous bedroom scenes and the secrets of the alcove. During this time, a cloud of Venus, each more languid than the other, invade the picture rails. For decades these voluptuous bodies in the midst of lush flora and wild animals will serve as a counterpart to sex education that is totally deficient in institutions.

After the horrors of the First World War, female beauty made a strong comeback during the Roaring Twenties while the man became ugly. Dadaist collages and masks, let us think of Hausmann's *Mechanical Head* , rub shoulders with mutilated bodies and disfigured faces in Otto Dix's expressionist paintings. The modern beauty of women comes to compensate for the horrors of all masculine war. In fact, the diva will have a role identical to the voluptuous women full of vitality of Rubens; that of warding off death. Only an exceptional woman, a modern goddess, can then compete with the horrors of the Great War.

In the 1930s, the large photographic studios were invaded; artist and bourgeois politicians rub shoulders there in prefabricated sets where they adopt mannered poses and show a face so painted that everything looks like a masquerade. A new stereotype, which stems as much from the bourgeois ideal as from stardom,



is emerging in the large portrait studios where photographers, like great surgeons, operate an artificial construction of the face : “that of false faces dictated by the dominant ideology. “And these” false faces “are always the same, idealized to the point of seeing a mystical aura appear under the effect of halos of light which halo the face and direct the gaze elsewhere, to another place, ethereal, supernatural. (Baqué, Faces, 2007, p.56)

The “glamorous” woman of seduction and dreams is a character whose imperfections the photographer has erased, extinguished all naturalness. This anti-naturalism found an echo in Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris* : “A singular country, superior to others as Art is to Nature where it is reformed by

dreams, where it is corrected, embellished, recast” The idealized woman of the Belle Époque while moving away from nature became the diva of the nascent cinema. And European cinema sketched the fascinating portrait of “beauty and the beast” in tune with the perceptions of her time, that is to say that female beauty rubbed shoulders with male monsters such as Frankenstein, Dracula, Nosferatu.

Abandoning the corset for the bra, wearing cropped dresses baring their legs, the diva’s public unveiling had an immediate effect on the privacy of the Belle Époque by rehabilitating the gendered body. Passionate kisses, libidinous touchings, naughty two-way dialogue, sexuality is staged and projected on the big screen. A new attitude of amorous behavior is emerging; love rhymes more and more with physical love.

Google-image / vamp cinema

This liberation of manners goes beyond the framework of heterosexual relationships. Indeed, contrary to popular belief, homosexuality in the 1920s is normal behavior, admittedly limited to a narrow circle where artists, intellectuals and wealthy predominate. Painters like Otto Dix, George Grosz, Egon Schiele seem fascinated by the “boyish” style and androgynous bodies. But the achievements are fragile. As early as 1933, Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia declared homosexuals “enemies of the nation” and locked them up in camps and gulags without judgment. In America, the Puritan lobbies of the religious right succeed in having homosexuality declared as a psychiatric illness and plunge homosexuals (them) into hiding everywhere in the West.

In contact with America, the cinema is slammed. This is the debut of the femme fatale, For history buffs, let’s say that the first was Theda Bara in *Embrasse-moi idiot*, (1915) American film by Frank Powell which created the first star, the one for whom the word was coined “Vamp” whose characteristics are as follows : “fascinating gaze, ring effect, games at odds with nature, luxurious costumes, orientalist sensuality, exhibitionism of poses and magnificence of ceremonies, superabundant pearls and jewels, cult of love, destiny fatal of the victims of this love. » (History of the body, p. 378)

This tempting woman, the modern Eve, will be the pillar on which the phenomenal Hollywood film industry rests. Greta Garbo, Jean Harlow, Mae West, Marlène Dietrich embodied the empress, sophisticated and sensual woman of the post-war period, while the Second World War gave birth to the “pin-up girls” (Rita Hayworth, Marilyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield) manufactured from scratch by the cinema with the obvious aim of fulfilling the fantasies of young American soldiers lost in the trenches across the Atlantic. (Europe, Japan, Korea) Erotic magazines proliferate on the battlefields while Barbie and Ken dolls become the fetish bodies of the American way of life to perpetuate the species among young people. So we must not confuse sexual liberation with liberation of women. The naked bodies of starlets have a strongly ideological character.

The European New Wave defended the body-truth of the modern woman in reaction to the body-lie of the Hollywood industry. Roger Vadim in *And God*

Created Woman, inscribes the female body (Brigitte Bardot) in its quasi-documentary daily reality and not in the artifice of the character (Marilyn Monroe), prisoner of her role / image. You have to film “the bodies as they are” affirmed Godard.

Bestiary body.

The return to animality

“The more man wants to be an angel, the more stupid he becomes. “ (Pascal)

The art scene has been a field of experimentation where all research and all claims have been expressed. Assaulted, fragmented, the human figure dissolves in favor of the interiority of being and its impulses in surrealism. This is the case when in 1919, alongside the Dada movement, Italian Futurism and Russian Constructivism, two French writers, André Breton and Philippe Soupault together experimented with a “new” writing of Dadaist inspiration, freed from the “dictatorship of the reason ”: automatic writing as a trigger for the surrealist movement. Originally, surrealism was a literary movement with Paul Eluard and Aragon as mentors. With the discovery of the unconscious by Freud helping, surrealism sets itself the mission of expressing the real functioning of thought beyond Reason to reach a higher reality where dream and thought combine as in a childish game to express the idealism of being. Surrealism then presents itself as the future of man. It is the Revolution in which human possibilities will be fully realized. Self-proclaimed demiurge, the surrealist artist wants to redo creation and is always obsessed with the creation of the new man and his illusory advent.

The surrealist being is at the same time, poet, priest and revolutionary. Rimbaud’s “Changing life” and Marx’s “Transforming the world” formulas are embodied in the surrealist act as gospel. Beyond the libertarian movement, the political, artistic movement, surrealism is an ultimate attempt to reintroduce the sacred through poetry in a society that has already been described as a “lost generation”, that of the in-between wars, lost illusions, failed lives, where we experienced “the immense certainty of nothingness”, “the revelation of all disasters”, “the intimate depth of an existential exhaustion” (Ribon) “where” all life is, of course, a process of demolition. “ (Scott Fitzgerald)

In *Angoisse et vie instinctuelle* , Freud develops the hypothesis that there is a drive for self-destruction whose basis is the “tendency to re-establish a previous state” especially animality, fantasized as having one day constituted the essence of life. ‘man.

With surrealism, the body becomes a hybrid, a bestiary between man and animal, from half-human, half-bird monsters to Picasso’s Minotaur, a procession of “ monsters ”, both marvelous and terrible, unfolds. on the Web. Surrealism will create bodies that seem to come out of a dream; they are hybrid, strange beings, like fantastic characters. Their action is like an irrational fairy tale.

Google-image / bestiary surrealism

Scientists and artists, more than others, have always been fascinated by watches, abnormal, deformed beings. Fallen man finds himself metamorphosed, assimilated to plants or animals under the brushes of the artist who strives to draw an almost genetic parallelism. Whether one thinks of A. Gill's "arborized" man or Pigal's *Plagiarist*, half owl, half frog. In this spirit, the prize goes to Toulouse-Lautrec: "at Lautrec, the woman has long smart fingers, she is a shrew, a mouse, a weasel, a cat, a weasel. Sometimes, like a dragonfly, it sparkles and swirls." » (Dortu, Tout Toulouse-Lautrec, 1981)

On this principle of metamorphosis and transformation, surrealism gives his works a universal character, linking them to the primitive, at the origin of the world and of biological metamorphoses.

"Javier Pérez's work inscribes the body in the natural kingdoms: both the animal kingdom and the plant kingdom. In his works, the body is transformed and ramified into plant forms such as trees, roots; in animal shapes, for example through the horsehair mask worn by the man in the video "Latigo" (1998) (Spanish term meaning whip). Images of organs, viscera, bodies and body fragments appear in his works, as well as figures resembling bronchioles, branches, even plant elements such as leaves or trees. Red is a recurring color in the work of Javier Pérez, the "color-sap" that identifies it. Generally speaking, body fluids are an essential part of his work. Javier Pérez combines in his installations powerfully organic forms and a very elaborate device, for which the body is the recurring pretext." (Philippe Piguet, in catalog "Javier Pérez, Hybrids", exhibition "Hybrids", Galerie Guy Bärtschi, Geneva, 2005).

Google-image / Javier Pérez

This surrealist bestiary is reminiscent of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Latin poet, -43 / +17), an epic in 15 books, totaling more than 12,000 verses; about 250 legends. It features gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines from mythology, but also historical and mortal characters of low condition.

From the initial chaos to the apotheosis of Julius Caesar, *The Metamorphoses* recount around 250 fables, devoted to the transformation of men into plants, animals or minerals; from the birth of the world to the present day, that of the reign of Augustus. They are stories of changes of form, or metamorphosis. These metamorphoses happen by the will of the gods. They are usually a punishment.

Monstrous body.

"Monstrosity is one of creation's darkest mysteries. "

"The caveman makes horned beings appear, men whose head is replaced by a buffalo tail, by animal heads. " The sculpture of ancient Egypt is populated with these bestial forms and Greek mythology makes them appear to represent the chaos at the origin of the world. Formerly for Pliny, beyond the known lands is the realm of land and sea monsters. "The Middle Ages are the time of

their flowering. " Their haunting idea doesn't go away. " Until today, the monster is one of the capital pieces on the chessboard of art. » (Ribon, *Aesthetics of catastrophe*, 1999)

For some peoples, the monster and the disabled were related to the beast because they embodied the failure of the human race; for others, on the contrary, they were revered as messengers of God on earth. With Christianization, the idea of the monster as a supporter of Satan was reinforced in the Middle Ages. The cause most often cited is that of the incestuous relationship between man and beast, sensationalist stories (natural calamities, epidemics, supernatural phenomena, visions or miracles, devils, ghosts, monsters, flying dragons, etc.) which invaded literature. popular. As we see, the monster most often fits into the disorder of the world associated with natural disasters as signs of divine condemnations against sinful man.

The monster fascinates and revolts. For there to be a monster, there must be an anomaly. He was for a long time an element of the marvelous, a prodigy, the object of a new science, teratology. The fascination of anatomists and artists, private study circles, became popular in the XIXth century with the permission given to a father to show off in a shack two living children connected to the same trunk with two heads, four arms and two legs. The public could satisfy their curiosity for a few cents. The exhibition of the abnormal : bearded woman, the toad child, the elephant man, became the main attraction of village fairs. The trade in human monstrosity intensified to the point of leaving the circus to settle on the London boulevards or in Parisian café-theaters. In the body of the monster are concentrated collective anxieties, fears of social danger which will make the fortune of circuses like the legendary Barnum & Bailey.

From curiosity, the monster becomes a show body in Barnum's American Museum in Manhattan; the phenomenal entertainment industry has just been born. Magicians, acrobats, exotic dancers, wild animals, parades of giants and dwarfs, the whole panoply of the bizarre united under one roof, such was the stroke of genius of New Yorker Phineas Taylor Barnum in 1841.

From the circus, let us remember that the anatomical staging intensifies the theatricality of exhibitionism; each anomaly is staged so well that it becomes difficult to identify its authenticity. The lure of easy gain favors the appearance of forgery and burlesque, especially since the invention of photography and the postcard. Studios immediately specialized in this mass voyeurism of bodily deformities for which the award went to contemporary photographer Joel-Peter Witkin.

"All art originates from an exceptional defect. " (Walter Benjamin)

Witkin found his way among monsters, corpses, perversions of all stripes, all staged very skillfully and meticulously. Here are some characteristic quotes from his work :

"Goya and Bosch, my supreme heroes, have transcended themselves through their work. Their spirit still lives in their accomplishments. For me, this is the

real goal of art, but few people have achieved it. This is why I think that art is not made for distraction, nor for fun, even if it can sometimes contain a funny dimension. The artist must be as pure as a saint, his role is to sublimate our conscience. Creation is like an act of purification, a form of sanctification. “

Here are some excerpts from classified ads that he publishes in various newspapers in search of models :

“Look for pinheads, dwarfs, giants, winged, changed hands or feet, someone born without arms, feet, eyes, breasts, genitals, ears, nose, lips, hermaphrodites and teratoids (living or dead), someone ‘one bearing the stigmata of Christ, women whose faces are covered with hair or large skin lesions, desiring to pose in evening gowns, people who live as comic book characters, corsets, fetishists and slaves, and finally someone who claims to be God. “

Google Image/Witkin

“When people think you are a monster, there is only one thing to do: exceed their expectations “ Joel-Peter Witkin

In the aftermath of the First World War, the return of thousands of mutilated soldiers with amputated limbs re-established a certain social compassion for the misshapen body and put an end to the public exhibition of the abnormal. But the spectacle of the monstrosity began again and flourished in a new form : horror cinema and its imaginary creatures. (King Kong, Dracula, etc.) Will follow a comeback of the human anomaly, this time interior, of a psychological nature staged with the famous *Psychosis* of Alfred Hitchcock and more recently with *The silence of the lambs* and the terrifying Hannibal Lecter.

Body exterminated.

Devastated by two world wars, shaken by incessant conflicts that affect the entire planet, marked by the appearance of new weapons of mass destruction and the rise of unprecedented forms of totalitarian barbarism such as fascism, Nazism and Stalinism, the 20th century has integrated deeply, and with gravity, the historical barbarism of Antiquity.

The extreme violence of the battlefields poured out on the civilian population. As of the Revolution accomplished in 1918, the peasant owners were dispossessed of their lands and eliminated, the Orthodox priests, the popes hunted down, the Tsarist soldiers shot and the recalcitrant proletarians sent to “re-education” camps. The Soviet Union experienced its Inquisition and its great Terror. Stalin, the “whipper father”, deported entire peoples, Cossacks, Abkhazians, Armenians, Tatars, Oubykhs, Kalmyks, Karachay, Meshkists and Chechens. Two million were deported to Siberia. Red Square reflected the color of the blood spilled by the millions of victims of the Kremlin ogre. Terror swept over the satellite countries, imagine a million dead for Yugoslavia alone out of a population of 15 million. The number of deportees in the gulags between 1920 and 1950 is estimated at 20 million.

There are also tens of millions of atrocities, rapes, beheadings, dismemberments, murders committed during the Second World War. It was no longer just a question of fighting an enemy but of inflicting the supreme humiliation on him by desecrating his humanity by treating him worse than a beast. All the invasions were accompanied by mass rape as a “weapon of war”; rape of women seeking to degrade the enemy’s parentage process.

The desecration of corpses by cutting up enemy bodies (ears, heads, hands, genitals) was so widespread that the staff of the American armies in the Pacific must prohibit the practice under penalty of military prison. This dehumanization or even this animalization of the opposing body is accompanied by propaganda work demonstrating the racial inferiority of the enemy. The extreme live torture coincides with the animal representation that we make of the body in front of us that we scratch with a machete of the human species.

“To crucify the opposing body, to suspend it by the feet, to rid it of its skin, to disembowel it, it is to transform the enemy soldier into slaughtered cattle. »(Audoin-Rouzeau, The body and the war in History of the body, T.3, Editions du Seuil, Paris 2006, p.311)

The objectification of the broken, denatured body finds its Apocalypse in the Japanese, Russian and German concentration camps. The camps are enclosures for human cattle branded or tattooed such as slaughter animals. The animalization of the human person becomes mass and reaches the horrific heights of “industrial extermination.” “

Emaciated bodies whose skin is detached from the flesh in whole patches parasitized by lice, scabies, bugs and mosquitoes, wandered like living dead through the decomposing corpses, filth, excrement frequented by vermin , such was “the kingdom of shit.” “

This Dantesque universe, the painter Vladimir Velickovic knew well. As a young adolescent, he discovered every morning the hanged, mutilated and disemboweled bodies of the citizens of Belgrade under the Nazi occupation. His works therefore explore “the infernal darkness where horror disputes it with nothingness. (...) A universe populated with rats and dead birds, tortured bodies and terrifying falls takes place. “This memory of the end of the world” describes deserted spaces, the empty sky of a land of fire and blood, the ragged ground of the disaster over which the gibbets watch, after the forms have been torn from themselves and that men’s skin has been stubbornly shredded. »(Pradel JL, La figuration narrative, p.208)

Google-image / Velickovic

Hiro-Hito, “celestial emperor destined to reign over the world” wrote one of the darkest pages of Japanese history, an episode called “the rape of Nanking”. By invading China during the last Sino-Japanese conflict of 1937-45, large-scale massacres began. Executions with bayonet or saber. Rape and mutilation. The “Rape of Nanking” ranks high among the crimes against humanity committed in XXth century even if the Japanese government continues to deny its impor-

tance

The Japanese aggression against China, from 1937, was completely brutal: massive air raids, looting. The entire coastal region between Nanjing and Shanghai was, from 1938, devastated. Twenty-two million dead including eighteen million civilians. In fact, China can claim the painful title of the most afflicted nation in WWII.

The bag of Nanjing, sensitive hearts refrain
http://www.interet-general.info/article.php3?id_article=200

It is in reaction to the German bombardment of a small Basque village without importance that Picasso painted *Guernica* his masterpiece. By painting the greatest anti-war manifesto in the history of modern art, Picasso also tackles the dark aspects of the death instinct, denouncing the triumph of evil over life. This process of anatomical cutting of the body expresses the unreasoned aggressiveness of the character, his stupidity and of course the anguish. These monsters appear in retrospect as an anticipation of the disasters that threatened the world and already gnawed at Europe sick with fascism and Nazism.

Google-image / Picasso / *Guernica*

Cubist characters distorted by pain and tragedy join those even more miserable by the painter Francis Bacon. While Picasso expresses the drama of humanity, Bacon makes a diagnosis on the misfortunes of the healthy man who ends up succumbing to the unhealthy and is annihilated in neurosis. For Bacon, the human species living in a torn world is truly under threat. His characters, suffering both morally and physically, with disconcerting realism, question our interiority : we are all both destructive and destructible.

Google-image / Francis Bacon Heads

Bacon's faces are disfigured by the spasms of a terrible cry; the mouth becomes a gaping hole from which springs, after having been killed for too long, "the stench of the human." If "the body dramatizes the thought" (Onfray), the shapeless faces of Bacon show all the tragedy of the deficient thought of a civilization which transformed the human into quarters of meat; a being-meat, nothing else.

"How does inhumanity come to man and is it transmitted as quickly as the plague, from city to city, from era to era? How can human speech, even under-spoken or under-narrated, in the insurmountable difficulty of saying what is happening, can it bear the legacy and the testimony of this sudden asociality of the human animal, which undoes social ties until now? in its tattered flesh, its tongue torn to pieces, its memory torn to pieces, its "offspring" torn to pieces in the great carnage that the species carries out on its own members? These are the kinds of questions that art and literature keep asking, asking us. » (Pierre Ouellet, *The meaning of the other*, p.76)

Irradiated body.

To put an end to this barbaric madness, the man imagined an even more terrifying madness by creating his nuclear apocalypse. The nuclear apocalypse is the "final solution" without a "singing tomorrow." So in all aspects of life, man will always have chosen *thanatos*.

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were literally "brought back to the Stone Age", the favorite expression of the great boss of the US Air Force at the time, General Curtis Le May. Throughout his presidency, Harry Truman claimed that the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had saved a quarter of a million human lives. And yet, even General Dwight Eisenhower informed his superiors "that Japan was already beaten, that its reissue was only a matter of the day and that the use of the bomb was completely unnecessary." So why the Japanese holocaust? Eight months earlier, on February 13, 1945, Winston Churchill ordered the total destruction of Dresden. However, as the aerial photographs of the English Mosquito planes later showed, Dresden was totally devoid of German military installations and had no defense system. So why the German holocaust? Answer in *Chronicle of World War II* , page 606 :

"One can wonder, at the end of this murderous raid, why a historic city without any military interest was so devastated. The Americans in particular - although they participated fully in it - called him "terrorist." "

But above all, why a second atomic bomb, that of Nagasaki, when Japan was already "knocked out" by that of Hiroshima? Dresden (400,000 dead), Hiroshima (140,000) and Nagasaki (80,000) were, in fact, only guinea-pig towns whose destruction was intended to militarily impress the Soviets and marked "unofficially" the beginning of the cold war: strategy of terror concocted by the Churchill-Truman tandem. The secrecy of this powerful explosive completely changed the diplomatic balance in favor of the allies. It therefore remained to demonstrate to the Russians that we had the logistical capacities to use it. Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrated this dramatically. As a demonic scenario, even the gods never did better. *Homo sapiens* or *Homo demens*, that's the question! " (Frédéric F. Clairmonte)

Sparkling debris
stretch in a vast landscape
clear ashes
which are these burnt bodies with raw flesh
Strange rhythm of the bodies of dead men
Did all this exist ? Tamiki hara

You are one of those people who believe it has to be seen to be believed, so check out the following site :
http://fagonazos.blogspot.com/2007/02/hiroshima-pictures-they-didnt-want-us_05.html

These images of Hiroshima were confiscated for fourteen years by the American authorities and revealed to the world by the film *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959) by Alain Resnais. At the beginning of the film, sick, irradiated, silent Japanese women watch us calmly to better guide our gaze towards these unbearable images. Before these terrible photos, there were only oral and written testimonies. The testimony below is from Japanese military physician Shuntaro Hida, in “ *Little Boy* “ Tales of the Days of Hiroshima, 1984.

“I was racing down the slope, when a figure appeared on the bend. Was he still a human being ? He approached me, wavering. He was naked, bleeding, covered in mud, his body swollen. Scraps of torn clothes hung over his chest and around his waist. He held his hands in front of his chest, palm down. Drops of water were falling from the edges of his rags.

But when he was near me, I saw that the shreds of tissue were his skin and the water drops of human blood. I could not tell if I had before me a man or a woman, a soldier or a civilian. The head was singularly large, with puffy eyelids and large protruding lips that seemed to occupy half of the face. There was not a single hair left on the burnt head. I couldn’t help but back away. I then saw a procession of other figures slowly ascending towards me, along the road. I didn’t have any medicine or instruments with me. I was distraught. It was impossible for me to make my way between these unfortunate people. I jumped into the river without hesitation. I hurried down the course of the river, under the lush vegetation that grows along the banks in summer. Driven by a strong wind, clouds of smoke swirled over the surface of the water. The hot breath slapped my face, the hot smoke suffocated me.

Seeing that under my feet the rocks of the bed of the river had given way to sand, I realized that I had finally reached Choju-En, one of the large parks on the outskirts of Hiroshima. I sank into a storm of deep red flames. The blue of the summer sky was gone. Around me, in the black wind, the river was red-dened by the reflection of the flames. As soon as the heat became intolerable, I plunged my face into the water, holding my breath.

In the park, the Ohta River is divided into two arms, one leading straight to Hiroshima Bay, the other, the Kanda River, heading east. To reach the city, the road to Hesaka crosses the Kanda River on a suspension bridge. When I got there, the wind suddenly changed direction. The black smoke moved downstream, and the blue sky reappeared in the midday glow. As far as my gaze could take, the entire shore of Choju-En was covered with burnt bodies. The corpses floating over the water were even more numerous. Countless survivors crawled along the shore, crawling over each other. The suspension bridge was in flames and gave off immense black volutes. Yet men, creatures of flesh still staggered there ; but, at the end of their strength, many fell into the river. On the opposite bank, an area occupied by a detachment of engineers was shaken by successive explosions. Above the flames, lightning ripped through the dark clouds in blasts of fireworks. Survivors, fleeing the monstrous fires that ravaged the city, found themselves stranded by the river and many fell into the water.

I froze in place, unable to take a step. Shadows passed me, which no longer had a human face or a voice. Corpses rose to the surface, others remained submerged in the depths, hit me, whirled around and floated downstream. Whenever I saw a small child among them, I looked up at the sky, biting my lip to overcome my urge to cry. Above the black eddies, the huge mushroom-shaped cloud shone with its five colors in the infinity of the blue sky. I then saw two metal engineers’ boats going down the river. The soldiers rowed under the command of a young officer. I knew him. He had worked with me on the construction of the underground shelter in Hesaka. When he got up to me, he jumped into the water and said, “ Doctor, get back to Hesaka right away !” there are a multitude of wounded. They are waiting for you. I immediately understood the situation. He shook my hand, promised to inquire about the fate of the military hospital, then disappeared into the haze with his soldiers. “

Beginning of a tragedy.

(...) “I think it was at least a week after the bombing that the first symptoms appeared among the survivors who took refuge in Hesaka. However, it may very well be that some strange phenomena have occurred before. Given the number of deaths recorded each day, a sudden change in symptoms may well have escaped us. And this, all the better since, in the first days, signs of improvement had appeared in severe burns. We had started to hope that victims whose wounds were relatively shallow would recover faster than their general condition and the frightening appearance of their sore-covered bodies might have predicted.

(...) Clouds of flies covered the wounds of the wounded who could not move. Big white maggots swarmed around their eyes, ears, noses. It may seem strange, but we were helped in our task by these large white maggots who cleaned the gangrenous skin of our patients by ridding it of all necrotic tissue ! It was with the report of one of our nurses that began for us the strange “ epidemic “ which was to worry us night and day for so long. According to this report, some patients had just suffered an outbreak of fever that had exceeded 40 ° C. We rushed to the bedside of these patients to examine them. They were dripping with sweat and their tonsils were starting to break down. While we were confused by the severity and violence of the symptoms, more and more bleeding appeared in the mucous membranes. Soon the sick began to cough up large amounts of blood. Despite the use of emergency blood transfusions and applications of Ringer’s solutions, we were unable to stem what then appeared to us to be an epidemic. The number of victims of these sudden and violent hemorrhages increased hour by hour. In fact, medical staff believed they were facing an outbreak of typhoid fever or dysentery. Of course, we used a treatment based on coagulants and hemostats, but this had no other effect than to relieve our conscience.

At the same time, another “ epidemic “ befell the survivors. They called it “ meeting.” When, under the effect of a violent pain, for example, they put their hand on their scalp, they noticed that their hair came in whole tufts, as if it had been shaved. The unfortunate people who presented these symptoms (fever, pain in the throat, haemorrhages, hair loss) found themselves in less than an

hour in a very critical condition. Despite our best efforts, only a few gave us the impression that we could escape death. Over the hours, the survivors would fall ill in groups of seven or eight, and then they would die around the same time. Later, I realized that those who died together had been, at the time of the explosion, at an equal distance from its epicenter. Meaning that they had received a substantially similar dose of radiation. In fact, these men and women who died in successive series confirmed the laws governing nuclear physics, as simple experimentally irradiated guinea pigs would have done. But, in the early days, we didn't know the real cause of "the epidemic." The Japanese army staff never raised the possibility of an atomic bombardment, so we still believed that it had been the explosion of a new type of classic but extremely powerful bomb.

Since the majority of patients presented with similar symptoms (intestinal bleeding), we sincerely thought we were dealing with cases of dysentery. But under the authority of the head doctor, we proceeded at night and in the greatest secrecy to the autopsy of the bodies of patients who died during the day. The corpses piled up in a field near the village before being cremated. We placed them on a sheet of metal and made an incision in the abdomen using a sharp knife. One of the objectives of these autopsies was to verify whether the cause of the intestinal bleeding was inflammatory or not. I carefully examined the mucous membrane swabs by candle light. I did not discover any of the characteristic signs of dysentery.

A few days later, when we learned of the news that the Imperial Navy radio station in Kure had picked up an American radio broadcast claiming to have used an atomic bomb in Hiroshima, we contemplated the problem in a different light. The syndrome that we had been unable to clearly define could now be explained by exposure to radiation causing disruption of the blood system. But, even if we had known this earlier, we would have been just as powerless to stop a disease for which there was no effective cure. Someone suggested resorting to the application of persimmon leaf, which is rich in vitamins. The leaves were picked and used by many survivors convinced of their beneficial effects. Most doctors laughed, claiming it was all superstition. In truth, this treatment based on persimmon leaves has proven to be positive for many patients. It was certainly not the only phenomenon to remain unexplained. At the time, we were unable to understand the nature of the evil that overwhelmed the survivors. (...) We did not know then what the residual radiation was."

The "atomic" depression strongly marked the intellectual climate of the post-war period. Since modern Western man lives in anguish and is in a state of near agony. Of course, man knew he was mortal but suddenly he discovers with dismay that his civilization risks dying, disappearing before his eyes by his sole irresponsibility. The foundations of his existence are shaken, he feels lost in a chaotic world. He has lost his inner balance. Man finds himself faced with a new reality for which he is ill prepared spiritually.

The American artist Leon Golub is one of the important painters of the post-war expressionist movement whose social commitment propelled him as a leader of so-called narrative figuration focused on everyday events. He denounced,

among other things, in large-format painted works, the brutality of the human condition. Thus he reveals "a sculptural image of man, ravaged and eroded ...". He had been particularly marked by the horrors of the Vietnam War. Member of a group called *Artists and Writers Protest Against the Vietnam War*, he denounces the use of force and the abuses we inflict on our world.

His subjects are usually archetypes of victims, mercenaries, paramilitary soldiers tasked with the dirty work of war and oppression in Central America, South Africa and elsewhere.

Golub's canvases are scratched, scraped, sometimes perforated, lacerated not to say tortured like his characters who are subjected to ill-treatment. The *Napalm IV* and *Vietnam I* canvases are representative of this technique of "carnal" fierceness as if the canvas were alive, flesh brought to life by carnage of all kinds. The harshness of his words is accentuated by a long process of applying lacquers so that his characters seem molded by the accumulation of layers of paint which he attacks with solvent showing a body slashed with oozing wounds. The whole forms a primitive fresco whose almost prehistoric chromatic density (prints as in rock caves) expresses the decline, the regression of the human species.

Google-image / Leon Golub

The man unable to correctly read the world in which he lives sinks into an existential error amplified by the impossibility of trusting anyone and the feeling of being manipulated. A deep melancholy invades the being who has just lost his innocence. "Man only exists crushed. » (Faulkner) Terrible sentence which reveals all the tragedy of the post-atomic man whose fate drives him to the possible annihilation of his being before even beginning to exist.

"The ruin of great ideas and great ideals, those of convictions and beliefs that have been shattered or smoked, the mass of shattered theories and hopes is much more devastating for human existence than, for example, in the 18th century. th century mainly material damage from the Lisbon earthquake. A spiritual void occupied by the insolent triumph of a technoscience which, since Hiroshima, foreshadows a catastrophe threatening the entire planet. A catastrophe, that of the End of Times for humanity and, which would not be due to the vaguely probable shock with other planets, or even to the divine will as it is expressed with anger in the Apocalypse of Jean, but a catastrophe for which man alone would bear the weight and the responsibility: by the perverse use of his reason and his freedom. " (Godin, The end of humanity)

Thus in all aspects of life, man will always have chosen thanatos. Seduction of disaster? Never had the death instinct manifested itself so fiercely on civilian populations.

This passage from the human to the inhuman remains a major theme in contemporary art. A new fact following the Second World War was brought to light : the taking hostage of civilian populations and the infamous treatment they had to endure. Vincent Cordebard works on the irregardable where the human being

breaks. *Conversations made to a dead child* shows us a dead child, gray flesh, scar on the forehead, eyes and mouths sewn with stitches, a stream of blood flowing from the nose. Inevitably we think of all those innocent victims whose lives were shattered. The artist's brushstrokes reveal to us the worst outrages, the worst devastations of which man is capable. Struggling with fear, we are dazed, alone before this "terrible face to face with these faces of torture and terror." » (Baqué, Faces, 2007, p. 97)

This regression of humanism in warlike barbarism also marked the bankruptcy of the utopia of universal love as taught by Christianity. None other than the iconoclastic paintings of the Austrian Arnulf Rainer express with so much expression this desire for rupture by showing us the downfall of the man who believed himself to be God and his metamorphosis into a wounded half-beast despite his human face. Rainer's work is associated with a way of the cross which never ceases to sink into the darkness of perdition. The artist exhibiting himself, growling like a mad dog and spitting at visitors, also paints like a mistreated beast and afflicts the face with the worst outrages ; disfigurements that are doubled by a real pictorial aggression strewn with violent brushstrokes and laceration.

Google-image / Arnulf Rainer Faces Pranks

The face of Christ, obviously, must be ugly, made ugly by the betrayals of history. His works are real staging of mortuary aesthetics which mistreats the human body, scribbles the face of Christ with the same violence as human history made up of oppression and persecution often in the name of love of the next..

Finally, the obscuring of the world leads Christ and man into disappearance as revealed by the sublime canvas by Ben Willikens entitled *The Last Supper* where all human presence is suppressed from Leonardo da Vinci's famous canvas. Everything has disappeared, the savior, the disciples ; the story of the Eucharist sinking into an anti-soteriology typical of post-Christian society. All that remains is an empty room expressing a mystique of nothingness. (Cottin Jérôme, The mystique of art, art and Christianity from 1900 to the present day, 2007, pp. 274, 241)

"Nowadays, and Nietzsche here again indicates the point of inflection from a distance, it is not so much the absence or death of God that is affirmed but the end of man; it is then discovered that the death of God and the last man are linked (...) ; since he killed God, it is he himself who must answer for his finitude; but since it is in the death of God that he speaks, thinks and exists, his murderer himself is doomed to die: new gods, the same, are already swelling the future Ocean; the man will disappear. More than the death of God - or rather in the wake of this death and according to a deep correlation with it, what Nietzsche's thought announces is the end of his murderer. " Michel Foucault, Words and Things, 1966, pp. 396, 398)

"This is the perfect crime, perfect because the murderer and the victim are ultimately one and the same." (Baudrillard)

Absent body.

The disappearance of the body in contemporary plastic arts is therefore premonitory of the disintegration of human identity. Nothing reveals it as much as the face through which man communicates with the other, expresses the mysterious world of human existence. When man disappears from artistic creation, he leaves everything open to his objectification. A dehumanization seems to stand out by the fact of the absence of a face in the representations. The supremacy of the body since the Renaissance is rejected. This absence seems to come from the fact that in the 20th century the face of man has been scoffed at and he ceased to be an obvious one and an ideal.

A modern culture founded on its power to build machines should not be surprised at the strong potential for alienation contained in technology. Henceforth, the denatured man, alone in front of the Infinite without metaphysical landmarks, disappears from terrestrial representations like the shepherd's star in the firmament.

Dehumanization, this modern disease is too deep and is eating away at society like cancer. This observation was experienced as a tragedy : "Man does not have the courage to take full responsibility for the next day. All his ingenuity serves only to slow down. All his ingenuity will not prevent the brakes from jumping "according to the painter Borduas.

"The world deserves to last only to the extent that the reasonable beings who inhabit it conform to the final goal of their existence; as soon as this goal risks not being reached, the creation itself seems to them without an object, like a play devoid of any outcome and which does not allow the recognition of a rational intention. " (Kant, The end of all things, p. 314)

Having taken the place of God under the benevolent eye of the "lights" of modernity, man found a rational intention consistent with the final goal of his existence: progress. The end of the apocalyptic world of theologies was relegated to an archaic superstition unworthy of modern thought. Until the day ... when man, this fallen god, fell back to earth when he was joined by the events of his own tragedy. This time, man was overwhelmed by catastrophes no longer divine but by those he himself had caused.

The Christian philosophy of love created the violence of the Inquisition. The Greeks created the ideal image of humanity while treating slaves cruelly. The XXth century became acquainted with the typically human totalitarian ideologies without the pretense of a vengeful god. The Enlightenment philosophy did not prevent Auschwitz and Hiroshima. Now the problem is more extreme. Globalization creates a planetary ghetto with its own internal truth by locking the whole world into a techno-economy that totally isolates the individual. And so everything will continue until its apotheosis: the world will turn into a huge virtual delirium . Our time is not post-modern, but posthumous.

In fact, we are witnessing the failure of humanism. Singularity, "mirror of the soul" or social mirror, all these distinctions seem to be partially erased when art

begins to doubt its capacity to capture human beings. Of course, this shipwreck of the body can be considered as one of the consequences of the crisis of representation as if the inhuman became our social, institutional finality. (Edward Bond)

None other than the painter Henri Michaux was able to highlight the progressive disappearance of the human silhouette in rudimentary, archaic forms reminiscent of prehistoric figures. Elongated almost evanescent forms, as if the contemporary work of Michaux, proving Plunkett's assertion about our collective amnesia, was right to challenge more than 30,000 years of art history.

The faces of Henri Michaux, spots or soft shapes that stretch, have given up any pretension to "figure" the face. They are only a fragment or a trace that create the effect of a form of exhaustion. Amorphous, they seem to escape any descriptive function. These deserted identities almost totally inexpressive, are clearly only effigies without thickness, in the literal and metaphorical sense. The figure fits without any illusion into an inevitable cycle, that of erasure. This dissolution of the face is a symptom of a historical and social crisis threatening the possibility of existence of a subject. It is about one of these faces that a critic wrote: "A head sometimes emerges from puddles, mud ... close and on the verge of disappearing, without ceasing to stare at us, to retreat, to reappear, to dissolve ... Everywhere, the body is present, even in its absence". (Press release, Hôtel des Arts in Toulon, September 20, 2008)
Google-image / Henri Michaux faces

Body erased.

The question that arises today is therefore the following: If modern technocracy in its powerful historical progression does indeed seek to respond to aspirations as universal as the quest for spiritual truth, the conquest of nature, society abundance, creative hobbies, a balanced life, why not put up with it and take advantage of it? Why are so many of us falling into depression? Why does the West and its standard of living of such superiority as never been achieved before in any other civilization offer the statistical picture of the highest suicide rate in the world?

Why all this if not that this human life has been emptied of its substance and that it no longer represents the great adventure hoped for. That technocracy has upset not only the ecological balance but also the psychic balance on which the survival of our species rested.

We suspected that the ecological balance was upset by human activity. But that the psychic balance has been upset by our consumer societies crumbling under wealth leaves one speechless; as if the price to pay of ourselves was too high to maintain such a social standing.

Increasingly, depression is seen as a narcissistic wound linked to the individual's sense of failure when confronted with heightened personal and social ideals. It is not so much the desire that is at stake as the difficulty of acting according to our expectations. Politically speaking, it is a disease of oppression that insidi-

ously breeds hatred of oneself and that of others and ultimately the loss of all interest in life. Depression is the expression of a revolt internalized to the point of totally demobilizing the individual towards his society, centered as he is on himself.

Already in the XIXth century, authors denounced the insidious evil that prevents man to act. Too tormented by their salvation, the moderns forget to fulfill their political and civic duties, complained Chateaubriand. Alfred de Musset denounced a world doomed to material accumulation and Dr. Brouc to draw this conclusion full of good sense on the discomfort of souls: "We want what we cannot. Instead of taking an active part in the social movement, we prefer to lose ourselves in narcissistic reveries. We prefer to suffer rather than act.

"It is by throwing himself into the world, by suffering there, by struggling in it, that man gradually defines himself." (Sartre)

Could it be that we are experiencing psychic upheavals comparable to previous climatic upheavals, a psychic glaciation typical of the postmodern era which, from depressions to neuroses, leads us inexorably towards the new psychotropic totalitarianism which will free us from our existential "madness"? The renunciation of love, of the courage to be, of passion in general to replace them with a pill or a pill shows the confusion of an entire civilization. The advent of the new man in a new city seems to be over. The change in our relationship to the body leads us to consider the latter as a relic of the past.

By reducing our desires to the sole material horizon, Western technocracy also reduces our being to its sole material and mechanical dimension. Even more, by locking him up in the present, in the immediacy of his existence, technocracy cuts the individual off from his historical journey and replaces the memory of humanity with a void, "our idea of ??the human being. 'is entirely evaporated in favor of nothing", a true "ideology of rupture and amnesia" (Plunkett, 1998). Such is Nietzsche's "last man", incapable of recognizing himself.

"Why is the contemporary situation so uncertain? Because more and more we see developing in the Western world, a type of individual who is not the type of individual of a democratic society or of a society where we can fight for more freedom, but a type of individual who is privatized, who is locked in his small personal environment and who has become cynical about politics." (Castoriadis, The privatized individual, Le Monde diplomatique, February 1998, p.23)

We are indeed inside a catastrophe of spiritual, socio-political and environmental origin, but above all psychic. We lose the memory of our essence.

"You are not sick of dying! bunch of cellars, that's enough! (Claude Pélouquin)

We are experiencing the catastrophe of the meaning of our political and scientific apocalypses. Are we terminally ill? Are we so obsessed with progress that we behave like a virus that destroys the entity that sustains it? Except that

unlike the virus, man is aware of his actions, there is the drama, there is the tragedy. It is not life that is absurd, but our behavior towards it. "As if the intimate psychology of man hid a shameful secret, or if the man laid bare finally revealed his essence defined by the desire to" live in the omnipotence which knows no limit or recognizes no limit to the satisfaction of their desires, before which all obstacles must disappear. And we end up being individuals who accept as best they can the existence of others very often by making death wishes (which do not come true most of the time) and accept that the desire of others has the same right to be satisfied as theirs. " (Castoriadis, The Privatized Individual)

"I knew what they were looking for with their air of nothing, people. It is kill and kill themselves that they wanted. " (Celine)

Radical catastrophe does not come from outside, it is in man like "a will to deny life, a secret instinct of destruction, a principle of degradation ..." (Nietzsche) And the crusades, the wars, holocausts, famines, so many hundreds of millions of corpses which show with horror the ignoble complicity between men and death: the bankruptcy of humanism or rather, humanism as an illusion which hides the "true truth" from us of our being: we cherish death from our fallacious heritage of ancient tyrannies and call it with all our hearts as the only deliverance. This has already made a writer whose name I have forgotten: the death penalty is not a punishment, but a gift. "

"This crisis: crisis of values ??and identities, obsession with work and 'growth', cynicism, depression and multifaceted narcotics, reign of the single thought, is the consequence of a dislocation of desire and of life. »(Louis Godbout, Did you meet Nietzsche today?, Le Devoir, 2000)

The works in black of the abstract expressionists are intended to be a confession of crime and become the ultimate chromatic expression of the great saga of human vexations. The atomic age, this extra horror devastated the human soul. The radical bankruptcy of humanism projects on the future very dark drawings and this anguish felt by the artist is expressed in a destitution, an impoverishment of forms paradoxically linked to an ultimate, to an illusory will to live : The a work empty of meaning gives meaning to its time, such is the paradox.

Faced with Adorno's assertion: "writing a poem after Auschwitz is an act of barbarism", which denies art any contemporaneity, artists have chosen to show the unrepresentable by creating "pure optical situations" (Deleuze) illustrating the experience of disaster (genocide) and disappearance (holocaust) confronting humans.

Man does not disappear in disappearance, it is rather the sublime which is dislodged there, replaced by the impotence of existence. The atomic bomb promises a dead nothingness devoid of all possible. The black atom is to the modern world what the black plague (the Great Destroyer) was in the Middle Ages.

The use of black pigment at the time of the greatest destruction shows the erasure of the traces of millions of disappeared who passed from life to death at the

sole "good" of man in the German concentration camps, in the Soviet gulags, Latin American prisons, those in Eastern Europe and Red China. And hatred among humans is tenacious; contemporary disastrous manifestations are not lacking : massacre of Muslims by Christians in the former Yugoslavia, civil war between Hindu Tamils ??and Muslims, genocide in Cambodia, Rwanda and most recently in Sudanese Darfur. The artist is confronted with the failure of art as a scene of liberation putting an end to the romantic idea of ??the revolutionary imagination in the service of humanity.

"This is also the task that the artists decide to carry out, since it will then be for them to reconcile in their works the two contradictory outcomes of this new post-war consciousness: the existential attempt to say the absurdity of the world or the craggy ethics of finding meaning in it. No doubt the situation of man in the XXth century, destitute, amputated the world, stamped his destiny, is it unprecedented in history. In this context, his relationship to art will radically change, as Hegel prophesied in 1812 in his aesthetics course: "In general, in the development of each people, there comes a time when art is no longer enough. (Jean-Louis Andral, in Contemporary Art in France - All the plurals of the nothing and the singular, <http://www.adpf.asso.fr>)

Disillusionment and cynicism take hold of the Western artist, suffering from the weight of all the sins committed in the name of his culture. Man is cursed there for his perpetual failures and his incorrigible propensity for corruption. As much, the man imbued with the sadistic power to command as the other, the eternal masochist of blind obedience that is crammed like a goose with barbiturates and gadgets.

How to escape such social defilements if not in the desperate enterprise of radical denunciation that is Body Art : the body / work as an expiatory mystic.

Q hat are the body that represents the artist? Are they unique or emblematic? It would be reassuring to believe that our time has put an end to the mistakes of the past and the condemnable uses of the body, but, as we know, happy endings belong, most often, to fiction. For History, the reality is more complex and less reassuring.

Emancipated or servile, royal or liberator, racist or iconoclast, the body in art tells us about the dominant ideology. Whether he serves it or contests it, he exerts a powerful influence. The 1960s and 1970s saw the emergence of "carnal art" known as Body Art, where the body became a material, a support or even a work of art itself.

"The putting into body of art as an act develops an analysis through an immediate personal commitment of social, cultural or political operations. Body art is a body critique of the conditions of existence. The performances are a discourse on the world. (...) Improvised or concerted for a long time through a physical or symbolic exercise on oneself, they shake the safety of the spectator. They forcefully question sexual identity, bodily limits, physical resistance, representations of masculine and feminine, sexuality, urination or excretion, pain, death, the relationship to objects, space, self-endangerment, etc. The body is the radi-

ant place where the world is questioned. The intention is no longer the affirmation of beauty but the provocation of the flesh, the turning of the body, the imposition of disgust or horror, the spectacular outpouring of the repressed. The body comes into play in its materiality and sometimes in a radical way. The staging of organic matter (blood, urine, excrement, vomit, etc.) draws a dramaturgy which does not leave the spectators unscathed and where the artist pays with his person to express by body his refusal of the limits imposed on the art or everyday life. (...) Performance is a critical mirror of our behavior and our intellectual blindness, it leads us to consider otherwise a conventional relationship to the monde. Body art is an insurrection of meaning against sanitized representations of the body in the contemporary world of images and merchandise. He says the refusal of the hypocrisy of a speech of liberation, of well-being, held by the media or advertising, but permanently denied by the real conditions of existence. It resonates like a punch on the table of social connivance, like a refusal to endorse the fairy tale any longer. (...) The performances of body art revive in part the ancient tradition of catharsis. (purification) ” (Le Breton, The skin and the trace, 2003)

Can we be surprised that it was in Japan that the first artistic manifestations linked to the nuclear drama appeared. The surrender of the Land of the Rising Sun on August 15, 1945, resulted in the suicide of five hundred officers according to the precepts of the code of honor of the samurai. Japanese artists after the Second World War took up exactly the same “patterns” of behavior and expression used by Dada artists after the First War of 1914-1918. In either case, a lost generation could only feel the failure of a civilization steeped in horror. It is urgent to clean up, after the state of aggressive and complete madness, this world “left in the hands of bandits who tear and destroy the centuries. » (Tzara).

Suddenly with sadistic performances against the body, organic sculptures from rotting meat and flesh, exhibitions of waste and detritus, the artist resolutely sided with the hatred of the organic. The whole of the twentieth century is crossed by barbarism, fascism, Nazism and genocidal exterminations of which the ugliness, the destruction in art would be the pale reflection. The historical importance acquired by the XXth century, the threats of destruction and its corollary, the ugly, that the aesthetics of beauty is no longer primarily the basis of art.

Bruised body.

It is on this observation that the artists of the *Gutai* movement, raised through ruins and rubble, *enter* the scene . They will become the mouthpieces of a worried society which has seen the great obscene spectacle of the disaster of which they were unwillingly extras. The *Gutai* means “concrete” and essentially playing on the allegories of the driven body in motion concrete actions. The *Gutai* is now recognized as a precursor of the European and US performances happening.

The energy released by these artists of direct action overflows the frames of the gallery to find themselves at the forefront of protest movements where street

fight is elevated to the rank of artistic performances while works of art and their materials in their turn come out of the gallery to exhibit themselves in the street. The city of Tokyo then hastened to create regulations putting an end to works that emit foul odors or likely to decompose or made of sharp objects, works equipped with a mechanism producing an unpleasant or too intense noise as well as works giving unpleasant sensations to the spectators likely to infringe the regulations on public hygiene. While the Japanese authorities engage in a radical Western hygienism, Japanese artists claim an art of recycling rejects and rubbish as an outrageous denunciation of Western consumerism.

Google-image / Gutai

The Japanese Tetsumi Kudo presents, in the installation *Pollution, cultivation , nouvelle ecologie* , “an exploded universe, where heads, sexes, human limbs mix with the earth, or are attached to metal rods that stand tall. the vertical. A garden, a familiar and almost Edenic place, is transformed here into its opposite, because we rub shoulders with the horror of dismembered bodies, where even flowers grow, plastic flowers in place of natural vegetation. The work is at the same time a questioning of our Western culture, with its dangers of radioactivity, pollution...” (Margherita Leoni-Figini, The body at work, www.centrepompidou.fr/education)

Traumatized by the atomic bomb which irradiates and charizes bodies, the Japanese artist Tatsumi Hijikata signs in 1959 the founding act of buto dance, which wants to break with destructive modernism. Dance of ghostly silhouettes, grimacing faces, eyes rolled back before horror, bodies tortured by pain seek to be reborn from the ruins, uttering a speechless cry.

If we situate Nietzsche’s declaration on the death of God around 1880 and the Holocaust and Hiroshima in the mid-1940s, it took less than a century for the new world without God, created by human hands, to darken in his turn in barbarism without ever emerging from the atrocities of war. As Michel Foucault said, “the body is a place where power that wants to be absolute rages on. »Decapitated bodies in Cambodia and Rwanda, eviscerated bodies of Timorese, human bomb bodies of Palestinians, lacerated and humiliated bodies of Iraqi prisoners, bruised and starving bodies in Sudanese Darfur, tortured bodies of Chinese dissidents, raped bodies of women-booty from war, bodies of women immolated in India, female bodies repudiated ... So many eloquent signs of an art of barbaric slaughter set up as a mode of government in the indifference of the international community. We know the joke : “God is dead, man is sick and I myself don’t feel very well. “

From counterculture to against nature

Black body.

Quite different is the revolt of the heretical artist, this one expressing on the contrary the revolt of man against his culture by performing gestures, acts which show their deep disagreement, their deep discomfort towards their society. As Christian heretics of the XIIth century who wanted to hasten the end of the

world by spreading chaos to be released more quickly, carnal art artists become the prophets of the destruction of the visible world. Suddenly with sadistic performances against the body, organic sculptures from rotting meat and flesh, exhibitions of waste and detritus, the artist resolutely sided with the hatred of the organic to the point of wishing for it. mortification and ultimately its destruction as the only possible liberation.

Actions / interventions inspired by the liturgical model bring together injured, mutilated bodies, evoking the finitude of the flesh, its disaster, its vulnerability, a sort of “theater of cruelty” and this until the collapse, until repulsion. Even more, it is all nature / body which is rejected here; the flesh howls its future putrefaction in deadly convulsions and the spectators, like predatory vultures or hyenas, await with delight the bodily, spermatic and excremental excrements, and the bleeding wounds like so many redemptive stigmata. Through this narcissistic and egocentric ritual, the artist celebrates his liberation through the mutilation of this exposed body / rot, the skin oozing its finitude in his hideous crucifixion. Art becomes a representation of human decay and of the philosophy of unhappiness intrinsic to our species. The perishable body is in solidarity with threatened nature. When man destroys nature, he destroys himself, his body suffers, it turns black.

**The law of the black body
like a viscous swell of putrefaction which contaminates the viscera.**

**The human body as a theater of cruelty,
ridiculed, torn, slashed, fallen, weakened, castrated, finished;
a grimacing and emaciated creature,
eaten away by graffiti, splash tag,
narcotics, drugs, alcohol;
attracted by the effigy of death: corpses, mummies and crucifixions.**

**The space becomes flesh and frees the sense of the imperative gaze,
of the vivid blue gaze of these bruised creatures;
by lengthening their silhouette within a non-Euclidean space,
where man, deprived of landmarks, floats in a deep imbalance,
as a victim of the wildest depersonalizations;
perverse hallucinations, tearing through the whitish streaks of light.**

**Epoch of dark matter capable of manifesting
the random and the perishable,
a purplish, oozing, daily worn-out life;
the bodies absorb the ridiculousness of life so strongly
that the crudeness of the postures fade away in favor of space,
the multiple ultraviolet rays which embed them;
settles the scandal of scavenging connivance.**

**Kenosis as in the great tradition of the dead Christs;
ultrasounds, x-rays catch the eye
that the machine carries on the man and,
anticipating the reign of computer-generated images;**

**the madness of the virtual;
a gigantic exaltation of the dejection flourishes;
the flesh is swollen, profuse bleeding;
the sex appears, soiled by viscera and vomiting.**

**In this apocalyptic catastrophe, the body,
miserable wreck howls its finitude;
and matter goes into convulsions.
Return to the prenatal of the Universe;
our fulfillment in the degeneration of life.
Decreation guaranteed.**

(Free adaptation of *Fascination of ugliness*
by Murielle Gagnebin, Éditions Champ Vallon, Seyssel, 1994, p.268-269)

The martyr body.

Only sacrifice can contribute to the Redemption of the world. This notion of atoning sacrifice as practiced (self-flagellation) in many monasteries in the Middle Ages and during Muslim religious holidays made a remarkable comeback in the XXth century.

The Viennese actionists proved to be the most radical and set out to destroy the very foundation of the human species : the body. Gathered around Otto Muehl, Hermann Nitsch and Rudolf Schwarzkogler, a post-Nazi Austrian generation struck by memories of the Holocaust tried to atone for past wrongs through acts of self-harm, violent orgiastic rituals mixing urine, excrement and blood.



Consciously blasphemous, this “theater of Orgies and Mysteries”, a pagan performance overloaded with Christian symbols diverted towards a decadent festive ritual of the end of the world. In front of a stunned crowd, a lamb carcass (symbol of Christ) crucified on a wooden cross, was disembowelled with a masonry trowel, the splashes of blood sprinkling the artist in a profane symbolism of baptism. This performance is reminiscent of the painting by Francis Bacon who painted in 1946 a human figure tortured against the background of an ox carcass hanging from a butcher’s hook as if the post-atomic world had become a slaughter-

house.

<http://www.visuelimage.com/ch/muehl/muehl.htm>
Google-image / Otto Muehl

“ This is our only program : the exploration of acephaly, that is to say of the extreme destitution of man, in decay, morbid exaltation, total rot, excessive outburst, as well as in the most rigorous asceticism, the most severe discipline, the most cruel mastery, which are the two extreme and confused poles of absolute Sovereignty, in other words of death as a transgressive experience of the human limit, to reach, in disastrous luxury, to the divinity as emptiness finally recognized. “(Wikipedia, acephalous magazine)

Viennese actionists attacked all the symbols of the phallocratic moral order and political power as well as all forms of social alienation. Muehl, the most traumatized by the atrocities of war, is also the one who will be the most fascinated by the expression of human cruelty. His bloody and depraved actions, a real exorcism, aim to awaken the conscience of his compatriots, especially the memory of those who behave as if nothing had happened because Otto Muehl shouts it from all the stands : war is the bloodiest of happenings. Their performances are a continuation of the post-Nazi theater of bodily cruelty and aim to remind fascists and Nazis around the world who collaborated or wished for Hitler’s victory that self-harm is an act of resistance. against the dementia of the executioners. Resistance from the loggers in the Soviet gulags lost in the Siberian taiga who cut their hands with an ax, nailed their testicles to the ground, cut their veins with a razor to put an end to it, resistance from Jewish women who cut their breasts, their sexes, who scoffed at, scarified and ugled their bodies to avoid being raped or serving as prostitutes, the famous war booty of male warriors.

Savage body.

The disappearance of the body in modern art suggests the perdition of the human condition. Faced with this failure of Western civilization, groups are calling for a return to the primitive. The body becomes wild, as if seeded with tribal identity signs. Two trends will emerge, one focused on the culture of primitive violence (black jackets, skinhead) and the other against cultural and peaceful (beatniks, hippies)

Black jackets (America) and skinheads (Europe) have adopted the cult of violence of their time, others will say that they are the victims. In the 1950s, art was no longer enough to contain the floods of energy of a bruised and disillusioned youth. We are talking here about a generation that was twenty years old in the 1950s, that is to say, young soldiers during the Second Great War who became young adults during the Korean War, the first conflict aimed at analyzing the forces in presence in the Soviet Bloc and the Capitalist Bloc. Black jackets and skinheads were generational movements dedicated to liberating individualities by creating new social circles in order to constitute a protective entity for the individual against the state.

It is the first generation for whom the progress of science and technology has ceased to be synonymous with progress for humanity. The American soldiers force-fed in the trenches by the propaganda of the comics whose exploits of the superheroes guaranteed them the final victory returned to the country disillusioned. Alcoholism, violence, tortured mind, existential anguish transform the



ism, forced the racketeering of several economic sectors - alcohol, drugs, prostitution - but also construction industries, taxi companies, food and catering. The psychological aftermath of armed conflict transformed social class conflicts into armed guerrilla warfare between employers and unions. Thus the revolutionary demands of the ridiculed workers transformed into racketeering are at the origin of organized gangsterism; high crime now rubbing shoulders with high finance, the street strewn with corpses transformed into a battlefield. (Louis Adamic quoted by Benoît Tadié, The American thriller, modernity and evil)

An ideology of opposition without nuances to the established companies, settles but this time, the dialogue is not sought. These rebels out of survival instinct kept a leaden silence, protected themselves in studded black leather jackets, and like heretical pilgrims roamed the roads of

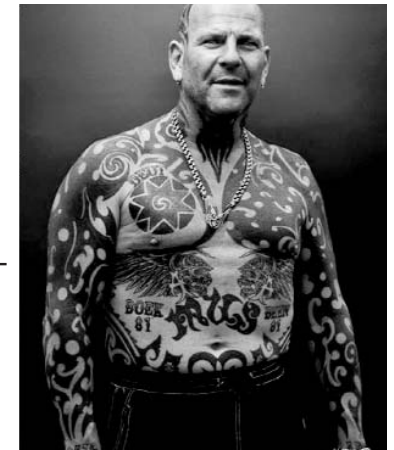
heroic soldier into a demobilized psychopath. The experience of the war was a generational trauma marked by a phenomenal increase in delinquency, marginality and criminality.

The post-war period revived expressionism, meaning alienation and evil once again took precedence over reason. It is not by chance that the main features of Expressionism - corrupt city, pollution, gangsters, whores, gigolos, ghettos, degenerate crooks, illegal immigrants - form the romantic framework of the noir novel, a very popular current of American literature. of the fifties. “The great power of darkness” (Melville) reminds us of the presence of evil as a negative force trying to rule the world through new forms of social violence and exclusion.

The traditional issues of employer and union struggles are disrupted by corruption, extortion and intimidation.

Organized crime is in many ways becoming the revenge of the proletarians whose socialist and libertarian demands, undermined by

intransigent capitalism, forced the racketeering of several economic sectors - alcohol, drugs, prostitution - but also construction industries, taxi companies, food and catering. The psychological aftermath of armed conflict transformed social class conflicts into armed guerrilla warfare between employers and unions. Thus the revolutionary demands of the ridiculed workers transformed into racketeering are at the origin of organized gangsterism; high crime now rubbing shoulders with high finance, the street strewn with corpses transformed into a battlefield. (Louis Adamic quoted by Benoît Tadié, The American thriller, modernity and evil)



America. Since the city bears the seal of Cain, that of misfortune, you might as well flee it. Life is wandering, thus renewing the immemorial pact of the *coureur des bois*, then the cowboy, then the hobo, then the “celestial tramp” with freedom. And there are more and more of them on the road : black jazzmen, wandering artists, immigrant workers, unemployed, ex-prisoners or downright on the run, ruined peasants and others uprooted from the earth. These “refugees from civilization” (Parkes) expressed the dismay of the noble man, the wounded soldier, the honest worker who can no longer survive in a world dominated by the inhuman law of money, betrayed friendships and loves. disappointed.

Black jackets, “rockers” and skinheads were recruited mainly from soldiers haunted by cruel memories and deep disillusionment with the future of the man who returned from the second war, recruitment which is accentuated mainly after the Korean war . (It was the same for the Dadaists after the First World War) To the attraction for Eastern spirituality turned towards pacifism and the universal love of Beatnik artists and poets, they responded with occultism, the cult of Satan, Nordic paganism and the quasi-ritual apology for bloody scenes and depravity thus marking its affiliation with the Germano-Celtic cults of Antiquity. For skinheads, the predominance is given to cults exulting the white race, warrior, sowing violence in European football stadiums, mainly English. Hair cut short, military leather boots, tattoos on the forearms and at the base of the neck, these often neglected ex-soldiers, unemployed or low-paid workers play on the image of the detainee, prisoner of his society. Migrant populations, often colored, are perceived as invaders that must be fought, hence their chauvinistic, racist and nationalist character. The tattooed body is a sign of virility imitating the hate graffiti on the walls of prison cells or disused factories sparing no part of the body including the genitals. These particular brands become identity signatures of people who claim a place in society.

But unlike them, the American rocker of the 1950s no longer expresses any wish, has no ideological mission, does not belong to any cause other than that of getting out of the game and fleeing the mass reduced to the rank of beasts. ruminants stuck in consumption. This post-atomic youth groped his way through a world in which they no longer knew how to live. How to express human feelings in the face of an inhuman and even monstrous power?

Norman Mailer, in his essay *Le Nègre blanc* (White Negro), called them hipsters, that is to say criminals, psychopaths, depraved people for whom violence, theft, debauchery constitute the only possible mode of personal expression. In the shadow of the atomic apocalypse, the hipster expects nothing from society to determine what is right for him. They have known war and are now convinced that those in power have gone mad and that, under their aegis, society must inevitably destroy itself in suffering and absolute despair. The only way out is to separate yourself from mankind and become “invisible.” “ (Gerald Nicosia, *Memory Babe*, p.222)

They then began to live in poor neighborhoods or on the fringes of large cities on squatted vacant lots from which appear constructions more heterogeneous than each other. Little educated, they refuse to work like the anonymous beings

of the factories, the office workers, the supermarket cashiers who vegetate in a routine supervised existence, obeying like machines to the orders of the management.

“ *L'Équipée Sauvage* ” (The Wild One), a cult film of the fifties, was released in the USA in 1953 and revealed to Puritan America the malefic potential of misguided youth. The gang of Lee Marvin and Marlon Brando speeding on the small Californian roads forever marked the consciousness of the youngest and created the mythology of the biker on his Harley Davidson. James Dean in *The Fury of Living* (Rebel Without a Cause) will complete the holy savage trinity of black jackets.

The nihilism of the late 1950s, but also the desire to rediscover a nature devoid of cultural and social constraints, the wild, more aggressive inclination, illustrated by “Born to be wild”, associated with the taste for the occult and for the Satanism (Hells Angels, Satan’s Choice) , will therefore result subsequently in a passage from “savage” to “savagery” embodied by the “heavy metal” of neo-fascist skinheads and the “grunge” of nihilist punks. The allusions to the phenomenon of post-WWII black jackets and that of the Dadaists following the carnage of WWI are adequate. The neo-Dadaism / nihilism of hipsters harbors the same rejection of culture. Quite a contrast with the pacifist movement, hallucinated, imbued with oriental mysticism which developed in parallel on the American campuses invaded by the petty bourgeois milieu which, for the first time, entered the university of which Ginsberg and Kerouac were part.

Kerouac had some against *Le nègre blanc* and other writings of Norman Mailer in the *Village Voice* where he associated the juvenile delinquent hipster, barbaric and violent anti hero with the beat generation. Kerouac energetically opposed Mailer’s description of hipsters and inevitably looked for a new word to express a very different reality; it will be “beat” and in derision, a journalist inspired by the Russian sputnik, called these young rebels “beatniks” because they were as “off the hook” as the first spacecraft to leave the earth. (Nicosia, *Memory Babe*-p.595) Now the primary meaning of “beat” as Kerouac hears it for the first time from the mouths of blacks in the South of the United States means “defeated”, “crushed”. »Subsequently allusions to religious beatitude and to the beat, that is to say to the syncopated rhythm of be-bop, will complete the panoply of influences. For Kerouac, the beat generation represented the quintessence of holiness for beings - angels - who suffered in a world whose degradation was only increasing. He hastened to respond to Mailer with articles in newspapers and magazines, that the beat children are not rogue hipsters but respectful beings like St. Francis of Assisi and represent a fundamentally religious generation : “We were all angels, we all knew that we were leaving disorder and absurdity behind us...” (Jack Kerouac, *Sur la route*, p.189 cited in Jean-Marie Rouss, *Jack Kerouac the celestial tramp*, 1989)

Body expression.

After two insane world wars, hundreds of thousands of deaths in concentration camps and two atomic bombs which devastated the gospel of technical progress, a new generation felt the “need to be told that real combat is not the political

fight but that it consists in putting an end to politics.

From politics to poetry ... Poetry, art, imagination, the creative spirit are life itself, the true revolutionary power capable of changing the world. (...) Everything is only metaphor: there is only poetry. “ (Norman Brown, *The Body of Love*)

This text by Brown has an air of “global refusal” like the title of the manifesto of Quebec intellectuals published in Montreal in 1948. Written by the painter Borduas and co-signed by some fifteen painters, sculptors, dancers and photographers, this anarco plea -artistico-politique virulently denounces a sclerotic society: “refusal to close our eyes to the vices, the deceptions perpetrated under the hatchery of knowledge. (...) Refusal to serve, refusal of any intention, harmful weapon of reason. ”In August 1948, a weekly covers, on the front page, the launching of the manifesto in these terms:“ The Automatists announce the Christian decadence and prophesy the advent of the regime of instinct ”. All over the world, the “dictatorship of reason” is being put in the dock.

Obviously another Renaissance is coming out of the great darkness. A new generation felt the “need to be told that the real fight is not the political fight but that it is to end politics.” Indeed, the bankruptcy of political ideologies has propagated an immense anti-intellectual tidal wave; reason is put in the dock. Disregarded in the same way as superstitions, traditional religions like ideologies especially have the disadvantage of slowness.

Suddenly life wants to get out of its gangue which prevented it from breathing. The arts as practiced in the industrialized West had themselves cut themselves off from the experience of everyday life, focused solely on producing a sclerosing aestheticism associated with the kitsch phenomenon. The 1960s marked the dazzling return of Dionysus and his liberating “happening” imbued with eclectic music, fusional dances, amorous fraternities and peaceful solidarity.

Inspired by the action painting of Pollock, Allan Kaprow, the first, understood that it is from now on the body in movement which makes work. A cross between the existentialism of the time and individuation, Pollock became the expression of the individual who built himself; “Pollock-en-train-de-peinture, this is in reality art as a direct expression of the artist’s personality. If we look closely, we see that the common denominator that unites hipsters and beatniks is called the urgency to live which is reflected in movement (Pollock’s splashes) , speed (spontaneous prose by Kerouac), syncopated rhythm (Charlie Parker’s bebop) . The art of chair rails is transformed into a participatory experience, both communion and communication.

Beyond artistic production, “total art” (Kaprow) had to be reintegrated into the processes of daily life. To do this, the artist must observe, interpret and transcribe the facts, gestures and events to make works with life, in life. Life is dynamic. The happening as body art show that it is indeed the body which is the meeting place between the public and private domain; also place of personal transformation of the social fact. More and more, the artist seizes himself with “arm the body” to thwart the “mechanics of the alienation” of the com-

modity body, fetish marketing product. The expressing body is a resistant body. The art of the avant-garde must dissolve in life and translate into an experience that invites you to live, to take the road, to meet others, to find their poetic sensitivity. Of course, the forces of inertia (family, religion, State) will try by all means to stem this flow of existential vitality. Those who resisted formed what has been called the counterculture.

As if by magic, the artist rediscovered the golden age of ancient Greece where the artist was the intermediary between man and the gods and felt invested with a mission, that of thwarting the disaster announced by the horrors and disasters of this century, to fight against the capacity of reason to destroy itself. (Ribon, *Aesthetics of catastrophe*, 1999)

Art must reconnect with the sacred and this passage will take place thanks to the resurgence of timeless and archaic myths in modernity. Faced with the political and technical domination of totalitarianisms, artists once again consider resorting to the primitive based on spontaneity as a means of slashing rationalist Western culture. The primitivism movement will try to take the references in the past from which it would be possible to build the future. Among these, the myth of Mother Earth made a remarkable comeback as a symbol of women’s emancipation. Performances like that of Carolee Schneemann (*Eye Body*) covered in paint and living snakes imitating archaic goddesses revived matriarchal shamanistic rituals opposed to stereotypes of jealous male gods and warriors

Google-image / Carolee Schneemann *Eye Body*

Talisman body.

But unlike the early arts of prehistoric art which were a sacred expression of the divine, this neo-primitivism is an expression of the human being, of his desires and his illusions. Like the totemic art of Prehistory which sought to build the individuality of being, neo-primitivist art, inspired by the rituals of tattooing and scarification of the skin of archaic societies, sought rather to deliver a message of authenticity closer to nature, against modern artifice. It is in fact a question of giving back to the body a personal identity to the detriment of the strictly functional conception of the organs. Thus the body becomes the staging of the expression if not of the exploration of oneself and this metamorphosis of the modified body, a sort of visual curriculum vitae, acts as a talisman which protects against dehumanizing alienation.

Google-image / Étienne Dumont

Changing one’s body through these bodily writings establishes a new relationship to the world that allows many people to increasingly express their dissatisfaction with their society; “The dissatisfaction of the civilized in the face of civilization” is in the face of materialism in politics and science. This quest for the primitive is part of a resistance to rationalism and cold functionalism characteristic of scientific, philosophical and Western political ideas by a return to an animist art where myths are seen as “a story of origins, a word chosen by the ‘history’ ”(Barthes)

Thus the body became the place of expression, the material of “spiritual resistance.” Faced with the impossibility of changing the world, the counter-culture abandons organized political emancipation for a completely internal revolution, turned towards the individual. Tattoos and primitive scarifications are making a comeback to clearly mark their dissatisfaction with current society. Political but also religious transgression because these archaic practices shatter the Judeo-Christian taboo of bodily integrity : “You will not attack your flesh, (...) you will not make any tattoo or mark. “ (Leviticus, 19:28)

google-image / Fakir Musafar

The artistic act becomes the ritual by which the artist tries to repeat the creative act of the Origins. The idea of ??the shaman artist will be a recurring theme in the art of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and will serve as a breeding ground for the entire Western counter-culture of the beat generation and the hippie movement. This will be the case later with the Hip Hop movement, a sort of poetic-musical exorcism akin to the practices of African griots against a backdrop of tom-tom and ecstatic dances.

“The primitive was an integrated man whose thought was centered on the universe as a whole. (...) Creator of myths, phantasies and symbols, he had everything a real artist, all the objects he created were real works. He knew how to party ... it was about going into ecstasy and finding the paradisiacal state of the fabulous time of beginnings. » (Maurice Demers and André Moreau, Quebec Underground, t.III, p.88)

The hallucinated art and literature then sought to take the references in the past from which it would be possible to build the future. Art must reconnect with the sacred and this passage will take place thanks to the resurgence of timeless and archaic myths in modernity. Because only myths are capable of building the bridge between the particular and the universal. Only myths remain, hence their immortality. It is neither more nor less than “re-enchanting the world.” “

“Greatness of myths. They persist as so many mental constructs fade away. They have a more lasting life than many historical events . ” (André Masson, All the memory of the world, the paths of creation, 1974)

This epic mysticism involves an implacable settling of scores against the trivialities and repulsive avarice of a society trivialized in the mercantile conformism of the “American way of life.” Faced with the inevitable and reactionary resistance of a certain intelligentsia mired in religions that it no longer even respects, the beatnik begins a spiritual parade, a counter-attack that comes from the East: Zen-Buddhism.

It is undeniable that Zen Buddhism never took root in the West as a religion but turned out to be an important philosophy where young people found what they needed i.e. the spiritual amorality of hashish and the sexual fantasy of the Orient tantric spicy flavors of Indian Kamasutra to express their rebellion against a society that has abused beings (it is said that the XXth century was

the century the most barbaric of humanity) and his mechanized environment in the name of progress.

The neo-primitivism movement tried to take the references in the past from which it would be possible to build the future. Indeed, each era seeks to update what was previously known in its newly acquired cultural and technical specificity. Brut art (Dubuffet) delivered from all conventions tried to reconnect with the freshness of children’s graffiti while Cobra art, a synthesis between surrealism, primitivism and abstraction, will bring to light a primitive bestiary of Dadaist monsters and masks. This sympathy, not to say admiration for the tradition of the “barbarian” peoples of this land, the counter culture will be the breeding ground for it : Orientalism for the beatnik and shamanism for the hippie.

Artistically speaking, it is a question of metamorphosing the simple natural impulses of the being into artistic improvisations: the creative act must be spontaneous like breathing. Automatic writing à la Ginsberg and “cut off” à la Burroughs, novel written in one go like *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac, body expression in dance, free jazz à la Charlie Parker, gestural painting without retouching à la Jackson Pollock, any contest to celebrate the “here and now” of our time on earth. Life is a “happening” and literature is the ideal medium of expression. The four gospels, the four founding texts of the counter-culture will be *Howl* by Allen Ginsberg, *On the road* by Jack Kerouac, *le festin nu* by William Burroughs and *Joyeuse Cosmologie* by Alan Watts or *The Doors of Perception* by Aldous Huxley, c ‘ is according to. But above all, the counter culture adopts the vision of the cosmic body of the first peoples in harmony with nature and the world.

A whole primitive spirituality is reborn and the knowledge of the time highlights a conception of the sacred which associates the cosmic order with the tribal responsibility towards the preservation of the balance, of the harmony of Mother Earth . European explorers brought back from America with them tales of incredible sacred rituals : sun dance (Sioux), hozho (Navajos) , quest for harmony and other rites celebrating the cosmic renewal of the seasons. Without counting the discovery of mountains and sacred lakes, mystical stones, shamanist songs with healing power. The entire space, living beings, plants, animals, air, fire, water, rain; all creation is crossed by the presence of an incredible power. It is all nature that speaks to man and reveals his greatness to him. This results in bodily attitudes claiming pleasure, freedom, brotherhood, eroticism, true jubilation of life.

A certain Orientalism also invades the Western world leading to a rehabilitation of the body / mind as a unit putting an end to the poisoned dualism of Descartes. Recovering the lost unity, such was the project of yoga, a veritable pilgrimage to the body as a miniature universe. This search for harmony was accompanied by a powerful current of psychological study where the emphasis was placed on a revitalization of the being. Perls, by creating the *Gestalt* t, reformulates that the human forms a whole, that there is not a body, source of material values ??opposed to a spirit, source of spiritual values. It was Goethe, inspired by Chinese yin / yang, who first expressed the idea that complementari-

ty should replace opposition. In *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, “each of the shapes created by nature is a Gestalt (configuration) which, while being specific, differentiated from all others, expressed integrally all of which it is the manifestation. » (Cited in France Farago, *La Nature*, Éditions Armand Colin, Paris, 2000, p.116)

Hallucinated body.

The underground beat and psychedelic gobbles up all that is experimental. Its absorption capacity is incredible; music, painting, poetry, dance, literature, comics, anything that expresses opposition to the system is avidly consumed. Counter culture is like LSD, a sign of recognition. This means that we know the ecstasy caused artificially by hashish, peyote, psilocybin, the famous magic mushroom, “the flesh of the gods”, which Carlos Castaneda consumed according to the directives of his yaqui sorcerer.

It was a question of reconnecting once again with the immemorial practices of the archaic mystical visionaries and the use of “powders of dreams” to open the “doors of perception” but, this time, under the aegis of science. . As early as 1900, William James, the founding father of American pragmatism and behavioral psychology, focused his research on the non-intellectual powers he had discovered in his personal experiences with narcotics. He then enthusiastically declared in his study of *The Various Forms of Religious Experience* :

“... our normal consciousness, called rational consciousness, is only a particular form of consciousness, around which, separated from it by the thinnest veils, there are entirely different potential forms of consciousness (...) No view of the universe in its totality can be complete if it leaves aside these other forms of consciousness (...)”.

Fifty years later, Aldous Huxley and Alan Watts, inspired by this claim, undertook research which had considerable social influence. But these experiences were governed by a well-defined “code of conduct” as the “set” that can be translated by the quality of the substance absorbed and the “setting” the quality of the environment where the combined experience takes place. in the presence of a competent guide. As an intellectual project of empirical research on different states of consciousness, such experiences were defended.

Studies such as *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross* (1971) or *The Toxic and Hallucinogenic Mushrooms* (1978) have very well demonstrated the use of these substances for spiritual and religious purposes by shamans. “This theory, based on the tight interpretation of Vedic texts, has met with the sympathy of several eminent Indian scholars. If they were confirmed (we now know that the practice dates back to Prehistory as far back as Neanderthals), it would lead to admitting that the absorption of the fly agaric had been practiced, there is at least three thousand five hundred years by the Indo-Europeans” and consequently that the origin of the gods of certain very ancient religions would be linked to the effects of the hallucinogenic mushrooms used by the Vedic priests including Zarathustra.



“We have swapped the smell of Sunday incense for the bewitching scents of the pot”

As described in the underground newspaper *East Village Other* :

“A contingent of witches, seers, prophets, magicians, mystics, saints, shamans, troubadours, poets, vagabonds and madmen” besieged the Pentagon to make the “mystical revolution”. White long-haired shamans began chanting incantations with the aim of exorcising the Pentagon of the bellicose spirits that inhabited it and ritualized dances coded with esoteric signs were to provide the cosmic vibrations liable to bring down the headquarters of the most great army of the world. “

They did not succeed. But the images transmitted of this hippie ceremony by American television galvanized forever a generation in need of sense. Welcome to the hippie world of the 1960s.

Marx, Lenin, Mao, Krishna and Lao-Tseu had just given way to the visionary shamanism of the psychotropic revolution. Unlike the beatniks who are usually more individualistic, the hippies are communal and fond of crowd movements, mass demonstrations.

The hippies rejected any idea of political movement, of hierarchical structure. It is much more a matter of updating a philosophy, a way of seeing the world diametrically opposed to the culture of Western domination, of material success to the detriment of sharing. Fond of spirituality, hippies love the cosmopolitanism and pacifism of “Jesus superstar” but hate churches and chapels of all denominations.

Like Jesus wandering from village to village, the hippies invaded the “global village.” The outer paths opened the mind to the inner path. The voluntary poverty of the early Christians changed his name to the XXth century to be called “voluntary simplicity.” (Mongeau) From small urban jobs to big rural jobs, everyone looked for their “new Jerusalem” in marginality.

“Loving everything and everyone is the rule that governed this society. You had to turn your back on all the evils of this world, materialism, war and all that, go back to its roots, go back to the essential truths. Nothing new in itself, a (millenarian) refrain as old as the world. The only difference is that something has actually been accomplished. This time it was not about a poet going to preach in the forest, but ordinary people, several thousand of them. “ (Nick Cohn, 1999, p. 261)

Dancing body

This resurgence of the primitive body, none other than modern dance will know how to embody it with such brilliance. Inspired by naturphilosophy, modern dance's mission is to free the body from mechanical cadence by rediscovering spontaneous movements paired with primordial rhythms. To do this, improvisation becomes essential to bypass reason and let express the vibrations of the soul buried in the unconscious and the dancer invents a dancing body, a sort of visual imprint of his personality.

Modern dance is the standard bearer of the resurrection of bodies. America vibrated to the rhythms of the so-called diabolical black music. Modern dance has stripped the body of its constraints and gave it for its field of action, the limits of its strength and resistance as a liberating act borrowing the spiritual, healing functions of dance in other cultures and integration of the asceticism and movement as in Chinese *T'ai Chi* or Japanese *Aikido*. The body was glorified again; dance was again revealing of the culture that gave birth to it. Vitalist, hedonistic, dance presents itself as eminently spiritual as a natural ritual of personal ecstasy.

Incarnate body.

The Christian incarnation - God takes on a human body, dies and resuscitates - is opposed to Judaism where revelation passes through a text, the *Tables of Laws* as well as to Islam which claims to be the word revealed to the prophet Muhammad transcribed in the *Koran*. "The verb became flesh" is the founding element of Christianity.

"If belief in God exists in all civilizations, the West is the only place in the world where we believe in his incarnation, that is to say where we have thrown a foolish, unthinkable, Promethean bridge to- above the impassable, in the form of a hominization of God, with, as a logical result, the deification of man. " (Jacques Julliard, Jesus, Caesar and us, Le Nouvel Observateur, December 26, 96)

Thus the great theological issues according to Guy Scarpetta are found transferred in modern art oscillating between the anti-religious and atheist struggle (futurism, constructivism, surrealism) and the return to the sacred and to certain forms of spiritualism (Kandinsky, Malevich), to theosophy (Mondrian), esotericism (Breton), gnosis (Artaud), negative theology (Bataille) and mystico-religious fringes (Beuys, Journiac, Orlan).

These artistic relationships to the body are all marked with the seal of religion and the body is the actor or the theater of transgressions or punishments which only have meaning in a context of sacredness and rituals. There's some Christian down there. A whole pseudo-religious artistic ritual is set up and summons ancestral know-how in the transgression of Christian symbols, mainly the Christic Incarnation.

A characteristic and verifiable feature of the artist's appropriation of Christian

symbols has been, since the Renaissance, the artist's self-portrait in Christ. From 1500, the painter Dürer, who represented himself in the pose of Christ blessing with his right hand, a gesture reserved until then for Jesus: the *Salvator Mundi*, inaugurates this new iconographic theme which spanned the centuries until our time. The artist's self-portrait in Christ is thus found in all styles and artistic movements where artists such as Gauguin, Ensor, Munch, Beckmann, Corinth, Soutter, Chagall, Falken, Rainer, Christinat, Wallinger, Burden have represented themselves in Christ and even in Christesse with the artists Renée Cox and Stani Nitkowski.

“ Take and eat this is my body “

Ex-seminarian who refused the priesthood Michel Journiac has nevertheless to keep in mind. From his interpretation of religious iconography, Journiac grasped the fundamental importance of the body : without incarnation, there is no Christianity, hence his famous performance of *Mass for a body*. A kind of Christic autophagy (host / body - wine / blood of Christ), where the artist gives himself in communion like Journiac by offering the audience to eat blood sausage made from his own blood.

Since Malevich, the sacred art of representation has reached its omega point with the monochrome *White Square on a white background* as the ultimate icon, but the sacred still remains with him so well that the artist has no more, as a sacred, than himself. -even. The artist stages his own deity, here he is promoted to messiah and begins his way of the cross towards the church-museums, the chapels-galleries to celebrate the pagan mass.

Because modern performances are shows where only the artist is saved by a personal metamorphosis of his body, a sort of egoistic, narcissistic Redemption of the "sacred for personal use." So Empress Stah, a virtuoso trapeze artist who offers us his own vision of the cannibalistic practices of the Paleolithic. She makes a tourniquet, sticks a needle in her arm and draws a syringe full of blood, empties it into a glass of champagne which she swallows greedily.

The lacerated, scourged body, the incised flesh of the performer, a sort of "remake" of the passion of Christ, does not however have the value of universal redemption associated with the sacrifice of Jesus. Since art cannot save the world at least it can serve to save the artist. For, henceforth, we enter into art as we enter into the priesthood to accomplish the priesthood of our salvation through our sacrifice in an "aesthetic of the Incarnation where the body, far from being idealized, heroic or reduced to plastic perfection, is shown in its naked truth, its poverty, its corruptibility, but also thereby finds itself an object of compassion, because of its vulnerability. » (Emmanuel Gabellieri, For an aesthetic of the Incarnation, Artension, no 14, p.5, 2003)

Metamorphosed body

This recommencement, let us even speak of the resurrection of the evangelical art of salvation, was the work of Joseph Beuys. Beuys, who fought in the German Wehrmacht, therefore took part in the world of violence which swept

over Europe during the Second World War. All his artistic work was oriented towards a work of memory inscribed in a process of atonement, beyond his identification with the figure of Christ.

“The art of the avant-gardes freed itself from it (painting) so as not to distinguish any more from the reserved field of art but on the contrary to affirm, like Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), that art and life are one. Marked by a personal experience of “resurrection”, Beuys offers a new perception of art as “reconciliation” and “therapeutic”. He saw himself as a shaman and, during his achievements, attached himself to many elements of Christian symbolism, taken up by the anthroposophical tradition to which he adhered. Thus, in particular, the figure of Christ, capable of healing humanity because he suffered with it and for it. The Crucifixion (1962-63, Stuttgart) is intended, through pieces of wood tied with rope with two white bottles and a cross painted in red on a piece of newspaper, resonating with the theme of Christ exposing his wounds to the eyes of all to save humanity. Likewise, in his “performances”, he uses Christlike gestures such as washing the feet, thus affirming that respect for neighbor is one of the keys to the healing of society. “

“In his own way, opposed to any iconography and even to any representation, he associates shamanism and his vision of Christ around the notions of suffering and healing. This reuse of the Christ theme is only one of the avatars of a figure who, despite abstraction or art-action, persists in not disappearing from the artistic field. But it is in an independent and autonomous way that it potentially enters into dialogue with Christian theology. ” (Isabelle Saint-Martin, Figures of the religious in contemporary art)

Beuys heals his psychological war wounds as a necessary step towards his resurrection. Borrowing from Christ the idea of ??salvation for all, Beuys sets out to spread the good news of art as a personal tool for self-transformation and social salvation. Revolutionary, prophet, savior and martyr, such are the stages of the way of the cross of the contemporary artist, art is a liturgy.

The performer becomes the artist who comes closest to the idea we have of the archaic shaman. The latter, in addition to being a storyteller, poet, dancer, acrobat, conjurer, juggler was also a spiritual advisor, a healer, a diviner. In short, the primitive shaman was at the same time artist, miracle worker, magician and sorcerer. It was the time when magic was not seen as a collection of tricks and illusions, but rather as a way of approaching the world. This shaman's design is the same one that the romanticism of the XIXth century integra to the mission of the modern artist.

One of the great thinkers of romanticism, the poet Saint-Martin explained in these terms the spiritual lineage intrinsic to the romantic movement and to naturphilosophy, but above all explains the saving mission that falls to the artist via his creative genius.

“In the current state of things, man keeps in the depths of himself, the debris of his first destiny and the obscure reminiscence of the primitive paradise. If he manages to listen to the interior signs that are given to him, to come back down

in him, until he can, by a very spiritual magic, seize again the germs which cover in his soul, he will carry out his own reintegration in God. ; but at the same time, he will restore the whole creation in the primordial unity. Only man, craftsman of the fall, can be the worker of reconciliation, the savior of nature. He is a being in charge of continuing God, where God no longer knows how to know himself ... He continues it in the order of manifestations and emanations, because there God makes himself known only through his images and his representatives (...) because the act of the poet is sacred and literally creative. » (Albert Beguin, in *The romantic soul and the dream*, Librairie José Corti, Paris, 1939, p.52)

Thus the artist, the poet, are absolute mediators who perceive in them the signs of the divine. Their mission is therefore to announce and present this divine to all men. And this divine is presented as a force in perpetual becoming which is revealed to us by the two parallel evolutions of nature and history.

Google-image / Joseph Beuys

Punished body.

It's hard to escape nearly four thousand years of bodily contempt. In the West, Evelynne Pewzner, author of *The Guilty Man* specifies that “the probability is great that man, holding himself responsible for the advent of evil in creation, judges himself personally, even ontologically, guilty. This is to say what cardinal role the notion of fault plays in all mythical, theological, philosophical, artistic and even political discourses in the West, thus forming a background, a subtext on which is inscribed a deep feeling of guilt. personal and collective.

A first aspect of the problem of the correspondences between body and sin is the relation of asceticism to the body. The body is both seen as an “instrument of sin” by its senses open to the world, let us think of Lot's wife (Genesis 19, 26) who was changed into a pillar of salt because of her curiosity but also as a tool of mortification and redemption since certain forms of penance for the forgiveness of sins are bodily, let us think of the scourging of monks. The bodily injury is part of a purification ritual. The nagging self-blame and the inevitable compulsive reflex of reparation are a pathetic echo of the now indelible stain of the soul. (Pewzner, *The Guilty Man*, p.56)

Resorting to the pain of the injured body to the point of exhaustion is the main theme of artist Gina Pane. The bodily ordeals inflicted on himself by the artist are reminiscent of the passion of Christ and medieval soreness.

Google-image / Gina Pane

Thus she cuts her eyelids with a razor tear, the blood flows slowly like tears which follow the morphology of the face. The crucial incision will follow, four linear notches starting from the navel forming a cross of blood. Like Christ on the cross, it is about freeing the alienated body from social and political oppressions; the wound inscribes in the flesh the appropriation of Christ's sufferings in order to exorcise contemporary evil.

This tendency of art “to go out of oneself” by emptying the body of its organic materials may be a sign of Redemption towards the resurgence of a forgotten, primitive identity, but can also be associated with the profane kenosis of the suffering body finds its consecration in the sacrifice of Christ.

Spiritually, with the body / work, we then witness a real kenosis of Western art, like the kenosis of Christ attributed to Saint Paul who uses this word to designate that Christ on the cross must empty himself of its biological substance to die like all men and finally divinely reborn. Mortifications, lacerations and flagellations in contemporary art testify to the importance taken by blood in our bloodthirsty societies.

“But the blood of the origins, intact in the meat of human beings, still flows in the artist who sweeps away bloody surfaces and tears off dead skin. (...) The artist reinvents at his expense a pre-verbal, chaotic and vicious source of emptiness. Mirror of the most distant otherness. The deepest side of the body-universe: the most distant skin, these are the true surfaces of art, the true mirrors of the divine. This is what the artist shows, the insane documentary, the scandalous cartography of the tragic marriage of being and chaos, where still formless flesh is born from the beginnings of life. That is to say, the divine in action and which passes into action. At the extreme of suffering bodies, Christ makes the horizon and the divine collects the blood of all those who have disappeared.” (Christian Noorbergen, *Les distances du divin*, Artenslon, no 14, p.7, 2003)

David Nebreda, like Gina Pane, constantly puts martyrdom before the eyes of the faithful spectators, in order to recall that the mystical life is not over. By transforming her body into the Stations of the Cross, Nebreda seeks in mortification a way out of the great existential worries. Nebreda is indeed an “illuminati”, an ascetic who, in bodily pain, tries to escape his meaty hell to reach the sublime but invites us to horror : “The photographs, terrible, horrific, repulsive, of a skeletal body, ravaged by pain, shadow of itself, tortured on the verge of death, subjected to the worst abuses ; and a face emaciated, lacerated, slashed by a razor blade, bloodied or covered with excrement...” (Baqué, *Faces*, 2007, p.99) The ravages of guilt of the fault of which the body is the affected outlet here its limit point.

Google-image / David Nebreda

Humiliated body.

The confinement, the madness, the pain, the loneliness of the body are the themes that Jean Rustin tirelessly explores through this refined painting, these infinite shades of gray which bathe his characters in a timelessness. He offers us his obsessive visions without any form of concession, neither with art nor with his subjects. There is a real rewriting of the body. In the dark theater of life, bodies move in silence, offer their nudity, their sexes offered gaping or out, deaf appeals to the sad flesh, never satiated because of ignorance or contempt. The aging, sick, ugly, malnourished body is the object of inserts or half-set shots in a precise mechanism of portraits of a group before demolition. (Frédéric

Vignale, Jean Rustin, the gray of pain, “Santé Mentale magazine” France, 2004)

Whether they repel or attract, his naked and ageless characters, taut mirrors of our monstrosity, exert a strange fascination on the eye that rests on his works. Jean Rustin presents a humiliated human body: pitiful, the male sex hangs down, limp, inert while the feminine flaw gives way yawns, purplish, oozing as though worn out daily. These people suffer from moral imbalance because they cannot find any reason for their presence in this world. How can we exist in this way? (Gagnebin, *Fascination of ugliness*)

Google Image/Rustin

Precisely, it is not a question of existing but of escaping from the world. These emaciated bodies with flabby flesh remind us that among mystics of all eras there is indeed “an anorexic way of being in the world. “The” putting into agony of oneself “,” to renounce oneself “,” to become without intention “,” to die to oneself “” to make in oneself the night of meaning “are as many formulas which attest that annihilation, dispossession from oneself to the annihilation of the body are demands of the mystical course. Thus overcoming one’s body by the deprivation of food, sleep and even defecation brings a beatitude which on the contrary gives meaning to their presence in the world by renouncing earthly pleasures in order to come closer to God; it is about transforming his body into a living crucifix. Here, the expression “to suffer martyrdom” takes on its full meaning.

A major figure in contemporary Canadian art, Jane Sterbak has been developing for the last twenty years an eclectic and complex work centered on the human condition and mainly focused on the body (anatomy, sexuality, identity). All of this work uses a wide range of materials, while showing a very wide variety of strategies in terms of its shaping.

Jana Sterbak’s work awakens and confronts all the antinomies, those of intimacy and aggression, of private space and public space, of master and slave, of elegance and obscene. The ambiguity arises from the outset, abuse, coldness and pain respond to sensuality, eroticism and femininity. Between attraction and repulsion, fantastic or macabre, aesthetic with sadistic connotations, the body becomes the place of conflicts of desire and inhuman joy. If suffering allows the body to register in time and space, eroticism remains a means of sublimating this condition.

Google-image / Sterbak

Commodity body.

The 1970s also saw the arrival of a new class of salaried workers in the world of work, resulting from the boom of post-war university graduates. This class is unique in that it enters companies in important positions without having worked there before. Before 1970, it was not uncommon to see a



simple machinist rising one by one through the ranks to become the boss of the company. This new class, called the management class, is unique in that it has no emotional or emotional connection with the company that hires it. For the manager, the company is a cold place where the harsh reality of the market is expressed by the ever increasing search for profit margins.

The capitalist manager also needs an imagological power. Socialist realism was to communism what pop art will be to capitalism, ie the imagological celebration of the machinist technocracy and the political ideologies that underlie them.

In this sense, pop art has no esoteric pretension to be strictly materialist, a down-to-earth vision of the world observable through the mass media and mass culture in general. If “the medium is the message” then pop art illustrates it well because the whole contemporary environment, whether the headlines of the popular press, black and white television, close-ups in technicolor cinema, advertisements. Extravagant consumer goods, celebrity photographs in celebrity magazines, ball machines and jukeboxes in shabby bars with gaudy signs, it all forms the catch-all imagery of the sixties. The post-atomic existential anguish of the abstract painters of the 1950s is wiped off the map : “To hell with the bomb” said the painter Indiana. Pop art is therefore an unconditional acceptance of the American myth, a total approval without emotion or sentimentality of the current state of society with its rubbish, its junk food, its slot machines and its shopping centers. This is why pop art is typically American and its promotion abroad typically imperialist.

In front of a simple bottle of Coca-Cola painted in black and white on a canvas six feet high, Warhol's friend, the filmmaker Di Antonio laughed : “this is what we are, sodas, canned soups, , burgers, chips, hot dogs, ice cream cones. This cultural enhancement of the capitalist product, like the bottle of Coca-Cola, is accompanied by an advertising escalation of stereotypes. It is indeed political propaganda celebrating the total victory of the market. We will also talk about an art of sublimation where the images of advertising, the star system, political icons are removed from their precise universe to be transformed into hyper-images of civilizations. From cowboy John Wayne to rebel James Dean via Al Capone and Bonnie and Clyde, here is the cast of popular heroes alongside baseball players, pin-ups and even cosmonauts whose image obsessively multiplied as so many Advertising slogans sink into the consciousness of consumers.



“We had the opportunity to change the world and preferred the shopping center.” (Stephen King)

Pop art is the art of junk. It is the Trojan horse of a culture of kitsch artifice

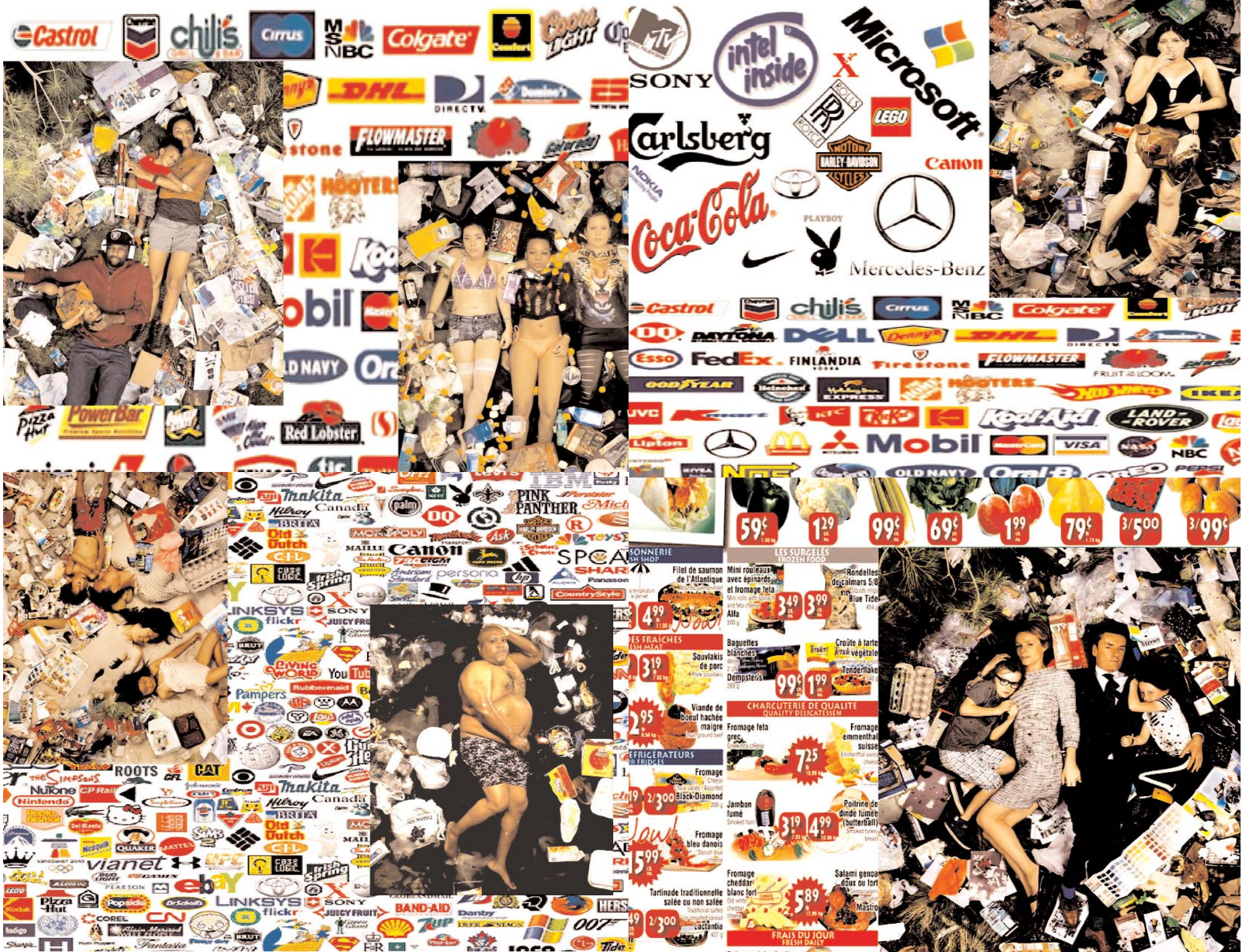
valued by the desire for possession. In fact, pop art celebrates the drunkenness and vertigo of the merchant festival. The coke bottle is celebrated as a product and trademark as much as the bottling technique which celebrates the repetition and banality of the machinist movement. Marilyn Monroe is celebrated as a prefabricated icon by the media just like the star system itself. All models, from Marilyn to the laundry soap box, are treated like boxes of soup, merchandise. Because this is all American pop art: an immense advertising celebration of star-objects, products, brands and machinist processes used by new technologies in the service of capitalism. The American dollar, Mickey Mouse, James Dean, Liz Taylor, Campbell's soup cans, Mao Zedong, the relish-mustard hot dog invest the art world and transform it “en masse” into consumable and disposable signs like so many objects and images elevated to the rank of monuments of modernity. The gadget, the useless, the ephemeral, the banality as sacred values ??of everyday life likely to be erased at any time by the nuclear big bang, this is all the tragedy of consumerism that hides behind the sublimatory fiesta of pop art . It is “the shadow of the Great Machine” which transforms everything it touches into a great mechanical mess.

Andy Warhol, the “pop-art pope” wanted to demonstrate that man will always be a source of disaster as long as he has not achieved machinist perfection and his “industrial reincarnation. But more than the product, it is also its mass production method that is celebrated by the work of the machine.

“In Picabia, Duchamps, the machine is still present as surrealist mechanicity, not as mechanicality, that is to say as automatic reality of the modern world. Warhol identifies himself purely and simply with the mechanical, which gives his images their contagious power. (...) This is why Warhol can make himself the screenwriter of a perfect representation, equal for all. All the images are good, since they also create an illusion. All the people are great, and the pictures we take of them are bound to be successful. It is the universal democracy of figuration. Warhol does just that: figuration. (...) The whole world, not only scenic and media, but political and moral is dedicated to figuration. It is a meta-physics of our modern world, which joins that of the unconditional simulacrum. (...) Because this is the fate of all our techniques: to make the world even more illusory. Warhol understood this, he understood that it is the machine which generates the total illusion of the modern world. » (Jean Baudrillard, *The Perfect Crime*, Galilée, 1995)

google-image / Warhol

More than any other photographer David LaChapelle has understood that the universe of pop art is that of the advertising designer whom he consecrates as the true artist of our time. He is the only one to have understood that kitsch forms a system which adopts brilliant ideas and arranges forms in such a way as to create an art / desire of perpetual consumerism as the art of living of the middle class, its “recipe for happiness” in a decor of pastiche, glass and steel, junk that invades, even occupies our entire psychological space like a kind of pathology. Advertising is so invasive that it adapts, sticks like thistle to all possible surfaces; labels stick to products, posters take hold of walls, objects in shop windows, logos and brands in neon calligraphy light up the night, slogans



invade radio waves, advertising spots, television and computer screens . Even the facades of houses cannot escape it. We are forced to note that the public space is entirely invaded by the advertiser who extends his sprawling visibility into the private office. “The *Res publica* has dethroned the *Res publica* . “ (Besson)

Kitsch is the art of the consumer society where all the arts, all fashions, all styles, amalgamate into so many stereotypes of beauty, simulacra and truth, from romance novels to clichés. political speeches, fake advertising lies. Kitsch is a culture of saturation. We live in the era of “scrapbooking” as a sublimation of contemporary individualistic society. The style of our time is that of all styles, abstract or documentary images, portraits, decorative forms, self-fiction texts mixed up and staged in the great book of everyday life.

Lachapelle plunges us into a very consumerist, voyeuristic and exhibitionist artificial world invaded by cheap, chic and kitsch porn by very often staging sexual perversions. Sex and food come back regularly, on the menu we find: pasta, fish, milk, eggs, grapefruit, bananas, cherries, sausages, hot dogs, raw meat, crème fraîche, ice cream and cereals ... Women are treated like meat that we present in a refrigerated cabinet next to the sausages or frozen in a cold room with fish ...

He has also developed a world of bestiality where relationships between women and animals are more or less explicit. His compositions appeal to ancient myths or the popular collective unconscious. We find in his menagerie a tiger, swans, a polar bear, a gorilla, lobsters, a sheep, snakes, a horse and even a triceratops who engages in cunnilingus! Lachapelle’s work is inspired by both kitsch pop art and surrealist bestiary.

google-image / David LaChapelle

MacDonald body.

Man who has become a commodity is by the same token consumable; kind of anthropophagy and premonitory vision which will find an echo in these terms:

“Capitalism would henceforth be the consumption of humanity by itself. By placing man in the continuous cycle of nature’s uses, the utility society makes man a consumable resource like any other. (autophagy). (...) What type of human am I if I can, once ill, use another human being as a reservoir of spare parts? What respect can I expect from society if I see myself as an assemblage of useful parts? (...) When we learn that two birthing clinics in Zurich provide human placenta to be incorporated into animal meal intended to feed pigs and chickens, what happens? (Le Monde, April 9, 1996) (...) Autophagy is not a circumstantial, contingent effect of capitalism. It is the very ontology of it as a humanitarian project. » (Denis Duclos, Autophagy, great threat of the end of the century, Monde Diplomatie, August 96, p.14)

In the capitalist logic, specified Lacan, was “substituted for the ancient slave a man reduced to the state of” product “:” products (...) consumable just as much

as the others. “

The artist Gianni Motti playing on the register of irony, went to a health clinic in Switzerland where he recovered the fat of Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi thanks to an employee of a Swiss clinic in which Berlusconi underwent an operation of liposuction a year and a half ago. The soap, called “Manipulite” or “Clean hands”, is on sale for 15,000 euros. The 47-year-old artist, who lives in Geneva, told the parlonsfoot.com website that he was “just amused at the idea that you could wash your bottom with a piece of real Berlusconi. “ (Liberation.fr June 14, 2005)

More seriously, Marco Evaristti, after liposuction, transformed his fat into balls which he offered to the public for consumption. Faced with the reactions to this act of cannibalism, Evaristti declared that he offered his fat balls to the public as so many works of art to be tasted : “ Eat me, I’m art. “ The market / consumption tandem has reduced our world to mere market value. “ *Homo oeconomicus* is the ultimate avatar of instrumental rationality” said Engelhart in *Global Man* . Andrew Kimbrell, the director of the *American Foundation for Economic Trends* , meanwhile, claims in *Body Wars* that “the logic of the market economy which has definitely changed the landscape of Western culture by dealing with human labor, which does not was that part of everyday life, reached its ultimate end by making the human body itself a commodity. “ (Utne Readers, May-June 1992, p.60) So one day the market logic should eventually consume everything: resources, nature, everything - up to and including the individuals who serve.

SEXY SOUTRA

**fade in ... I used to slip by
the window at the time when the women undress in
manic-sexual night running striptease plot
alleys and backyards in search of visions
carnal ... I was Superman Zorro millionaire
Seeing visionary voyeur with X-ray eyes to capture
Baudelairean lesbian caresses behind
walls / suddenly through a garage door
half-open appears to me the holy secretary
nymphomaniac draped in virginal gauze - my
zeppelin bursts in instant dream sky
Freudians fire artifice aurora borealis
the firmament the ass penis push-ups in
the corridor-vagina hi-han - I unsheath my
tear gas gun I say to myself, not the hair
legs then I address him reverently
the parable: allô beautiful apparition
sexy, my name is Roger 7UP Lévesque data rocker
tuberculosis poet of the globetrotting Pepsi generation
sex adventures of the gunman hero world
Oral-anal-genital orals in the biosphere
my whole mission is to fight boredom**

moving in which the planet is stuck the stress hour
 peak that will blow all the fuses to issue
 housewives who during their labor
 Sexual prowess is obsessed with washing
 that they have to do the next day I fuck so much
 although I have crooked eyes I have a generator
 of muscles a dynamo of sensuality a cloud
 smoke pot at a rock music show I'm overflowing
 pelvic energy I can type in
 other people's thoughts I wash myself in holy water and worse
 I'm shooting at the Drano let's go into the garage let's shut up
 the door to avoid drafts of looks
 prying eyes coming from belated swingers unite
 my Harley-Davidson virility to your Contessa femininity
 Slims make love lying in this moving
 oil stain that decorates the cement floor
 you know not only am i got love
 I also excel in the art of conversations
 postcoital ... fade out
 (Pierre Lemieux, Estuaire, no 12, p.25,1979)

Hybrid body.

The first dissections broke down the body into different elements perceived as so many available materials. From subject, the body became a technical object and the transformation of the body into rare pieces gives it a new value, this time, market. But above all our conception of man is forever altered.

William Paley (1743-1805) a member of the Anglican clergy, is passionate about the natural sciences and collects all the major works in zoology, botany and anatomy to illustrate the basis of his work published under the title of *Natural Theology*. By seeking divine predispositions hidden in the living world : man, animal plants, he opened the door to future molecular research and genetic manipulation. By refusing to think beyond the physical, applied science closes the door to any attempt at philosophical exploration of reality and locks human thought into an ideological prison, a sort of single thought. Man is an application of functional phenomena as demonstrated by Paley that science must develop. Both humans and living beings are considered natural resources, a reservoir of mechanized biological organs.

The body, seat of human identity, is transformed into an impersonal reservoir of interchangeable organs. Organs and even entire corpses become objects of lust and nourish what Jean Ziegler in *The Living and the Dead* calls "commercial cannibalism." (Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1975, p.33)

Mutants and other hybrid beings still invade the contemporary imagination and artists question the biological status quo as in *Star war* where the characters seem straight out of the surrealist bestiary. Body modifications allow access to a new experience and the pleasure of recomposing another self-image.

The hybridization of bodies encourages travel and all exchanges. Transplants organize a large circulation of organs between human bodies. From one individual to another, but also between the dead and the living. Among humanity, but also from one species to another: people are grafted with baboon hearts, pig livers, and they are made to ingest hormones produced by bacteria. Implants and prostheses blur the line between the mineral and the living.

The eyes (corneas), sperm, eggs, embryos and above all blood are now socialized, pooled and preserved in special banks. Common blood flows from body to body through an enormous international network, the economic, technological and medical components of which can no longer be distinguished. The red fluid of life irrigates a collective body, formless, dispersed. The flesh and the blood, put in common, leave the subjective intimacy, pass outside. But this public flesh returns to the transplanted individual, to the recipient of a transfusion, to the consumer of hormones. The collective body returns to modify the private flesh. Sometimes he resuscitates or fertilizes her in vitro.

Each individual body becomes part of a huge hybrid and globalized hypercorps. The hypercorps of humanity extends its chimeric tissues between the epidermis, between species, across borders and oceans, from one bank to the other of the river of life.

No country is exempt from organ banks and the market, but it is especially in poor countries that we see advertisements in newspapers asking for kidneys, eyes, testicles, corneas, skin against often derisory premiums. Even hospitals and medical clinics trade in fetuses and umbilical cords (stem cells) for genetic manipulation and the placenta for pharmacological beauty products.

Metal body.

The failure of pop culture to agree to say no to violence, to war, and to seek social or spiritual emancipation for all, allowed the birth of the musical genre that would catalyze the most extreme violence in the world. history of music : heavy metal. “

Neo-Christianity being too often identified with hippies and synonymous with an established order, it was necessary to turn to other forms of spirituality, even occultism and Satanism. The return to nature as a desire to rediscover a nature devoid of cultural and social constraints was a very popular theme in the 1960s. It was expressed in the hippie communities settled in the countryside, living in self-management, cultivating the land, seeking communion with nature. He was also expressed in groups that were more extreme in their words and their ideology, such as bikers, those bikers who, far from seeking harmony with nature, were more attached to finding a state of nature, to living through a wild outburst, with the important part of aggressiveness and violence that this implies. This is how the song “ *Born to be wild* ” will become the anthem of generations of bikers traveling the roads of the United States.

Its ideology is ambiguous. There is a game of attraction / repulsion for violence, providing fundamentally no response, and resulting in a nihilism exacer-

bated by the prolongation of the Vietnam War. Heavy metal will be the recognized instigator of many other currents, such as gothic rock, punk, grunge etc. Surrounded by a decor of occult rituals, made of giant crucifixes and esoteric symbols, developing a satanic and pagan visual, the metal groups will establish both musical and textual criteria, both in terms of clothing and attitudes for entire generations of young people disappointed by the Flower Power of hippie pacifists.

If hippies and pacifists dressed in bright colors with flower patterns, and sported



a smile, musicians and heavy metal fans would wrap themselves in black leather jackets or dark wizarding costumes and grimace. each of their public appearances. (Jérôme Bonnin , <http://www.artelio.org/art>.)

Cursed body

“Sympathy for the devils. “ (Rolling Stones)

Faced with so many faces tense with pain that cry out their dismay, so many monstrous abnormalities evolving in a degraded, heavy, polluted environment, how can man accept to live in a world where “everything is only a helpless dream? , castrated desire, uncomfortable imagery ”? “We are made to go down

and not to go up, ” concludes Ensor.

The first cripples of urbanity emerge as plague icons from the Middle Ages; the era of sadomasochistic autoflagellations is far from over. But what good use a magnified body in such a rotten society? the punks rage in chorus. Thin, asexual bodies, pierced with a safety pin, a dog collar around their neck, a loving couple standing on a leash in the street, spiky hair dyed in orange, disturbing make-up, crucifixes for earrings, torn rags adorned with swastikas, “no future” and “destroy” slogans as banners, hate speech, “I hate you too” tattooed on the forearms, these are some of the elements that made headlines from the London *Daily Mail* : “These people are the scum of civilization. Since God has never been able to fulfill his promises so well go and see Satan’s side. Because we must not be mistaken “these horsemen of the Apocalypse” really hate you.

It should be noted from the outset that we are analyzing here the original punk movement (1970) which subsequently dissolved in the 1980s, recovered by fashion. Transformed into a dress style, the “punk attitude” lost all force of corrosion and scattered into a multitude of sub-groups as harmless as each other: new wave, gothic, gloom, grunge, etc.

It is 1975. Great Britain is stuck in an economic recession, the unemployment rate is reaching staggering heights. The only horizon of youth is existential emptiness and the absolute horror of boredom. England is rotting on its feet and the young people are suffocating. A whole section of society is crumbling, the children of Cioran and the grandchildren of Nietzsche have the nausea of ??the “blank generation”, the empty generation of mummified witnesses of a desperate society that has chosen to self-destruct. (François Keen) Let’s go see if they don’t have some good reasons. What is behind this absent look, this sudden change of mood, this nervous sway, if not the psychotic expression of emptiness and boredom of an entire generation.

We have witnessed helplessly, live, the exposure of modern misery in all its forms, the emergence of another “lost generation” but which, this time, will stage its own pain and death. their own suffering in the pure Dadaist negation of “trash aestheticism”: the art par excellence of urban waste, hostile guerrillas and homeless people whom they have become by force of circumstances or by choice. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it is now possible to choose the street as a career plan and make your life a performance 24 hours a day. What the artist expresses, they experience. Like the performance artist who turns violence against himself, against his own body, punk uses both his body and his “look” to spit his nihilistic hatred in our faces and show that perversion to be is their only social project.

“I am the Antichrist of American values. I’m drunk on talk show overalls. I am here to help hysterical housewives wade through their suffering. America today is afraid of reaping what it sowed. Too bad for her if we are the result. A bunch of lost and disillusioned kids. » (Marilyn Manson in *Rage*, no 9, November 1994, p.83)

“The man’s face has become ugly and worn. “ (Ball)

Punk art is the art of regression in digression. “The disintegration has to set in to the depths of the creative process itself. The body burned, scarified, soiled becomes the staging of the radical refusal of the conditions of existence of England in serious economic difficulty. “Their faces were pockmarked, acne, stammering, sick, scarred, damaged and what their new decorations emphasized was failure, already on their face. “ (Marcus)

Punk adopts the monster look to better defuse the normative discourse of a society that it challenges in the same way that the monster in the Middle Ages questioned the perfection of divine creation. Let us not forget that the monster has always fascinated Western art. Even Descartes admits that if the monster persists between fear and fascination, it is because it expresses “impulses so archaic that it would be pointless to want to eradicate them. But undoubtedly infinitely more difficult to face them. » (Baqué, Faces, 2007, p. 118)

This bodily dissidence is accompanied by greasy, lacerated or patched clothes, not to mention the studded black jacket recovered from the “bikers” for boys and garish makeup, tapered stockings, torn skirts pinned with soiled sanitary tampons. According to Bolon’s study in *Morale du Masque*, punks “mimic Evil putting on the bizarre clothes in order to dynamise conventions and bring out repressed“ truth”. Their provocations aim above all to destabilize social conscience, to widen the abyss on which they are seated and which they carefully try to forget.” (Marcus and Bolon, cited in Le Breton, Signes Identity, p.70-71)

Even the language must be dislocated. The writing, gutted, the syntax exploded, the grammar annihilated. Such is the punk culture, a neo-prehistoric culture expressed by esoteric signs, kabbalistic tags. While the hippies claimed their belonging to the world, the punks claim a territory of their own that they appropriate. “Existential” marks appear on the walls of their neighborhood and on the buildings they frequent on a daily basis. Like the dogs they adopt, they mark their territory revealing radical possession of the clan, gang or ethnic group.

Graffiti and tags form the backbone of a new pictorial grammar like so many coded hieroglyphics understood only by initiates. Urban taggers transform the walls of slums, subway trains, suburban trains like so many works inaccessible to museums, galleries, collectors and against everything “an art system” and even against everything the socio-cultural apparatus, artist grants, government programs, which underpin it.

“Art is the most beautiful of lies” said Debussy, punk will give it its counterpart: its true ugliness. Dada masks have already been described as hideous faces, scarred with scars



like the faces of soldiers mutilated by a bayonet. The punks will be inspired by it. With its tyrannosaur crests on its head, it looks like punk has barely escaped the walls of rock art and left the caves of Lascaux. Branding, cutting, placing subcutaneous implants perpetuate the initiation rituals of primitive tribes as opposition to contemporary societies and express the rejection of the false discourse of well-being held by the media and advertising. The punk attitude is part of the neo-primitivism art movement. These modern primitives intend to reintroduce “tribal” at the heart of modernity. Their body becomes the ultimate refuge of experimentation and singular identity, a question of “making one’s place” and breaking out of anonymity. The physical ugliness of punk and this is its scandalous effect, defeats our identity in the human figure to make it fall into animality. The ugliness of punk unconsciously returns us to our moral ugliness. As a living art, punk uses the monster’s unnatural nature to express its counter culture, hence our dismay at this nihilist vision.

A century ago, the European philosopher Nietzsche brought to light this malaise that afflicted the XXth century nihilism, the expression of a universal decadence that generates a sense of absurdity at the spectacle of a meaningless world.

And Rotten, the singer of the Sex Pistols to scream :

“The future does not exist, the future does not exist,
The future does not exist for you. “

The punks are the cruel image of the much-heralded catastrophe of the average man, mediocre, sick of our democracies, the very type of decadence, decomposition, and weakness which present themselves as the Nietzschean “last man”. They feel more than any other “the horror of a civilization which allows massacres to continue, which sends its youth to be killed or quite simply leaves it no hope: no future (...) “ (Poupeau in Siècle rebelle)

Even if the observation still persists, the punk movement lost its strong protest against the system at the same time as the disappearance of musical groups (Sex Pistols, Clash, the Ramones, Patti Smith, Iggy Pop) supporting the cause. But it was above all the dazzling recovery of the punk look by the clothing and cosmetics industry that radically changed the status of the movement and defused the scandal by diverting it towards mass consumption.

Eroticized body.

Everything is erotic since Freud, For Loos, “All art is erotic. A horizontal line was the reclining woman; a vertical line, the man who penetrates it ...” As such, Mondrian’s works are veritable orgies. According to Wilhelm Reich, the dripping technique developed by Jackson Pollock is pictorial ejaculation while with Picabia, the pistons and cranks of the machines become animated sexual organs, a veritable “love parade.” » (Gilles Néret, Erotica of art, 1993)

In the 1940s, the Second World War promoted the financial autonomy of

women working in factories in the “war effort”. The post-war years saw the arrival of the baby boom girls. Better educated and above all graduates of the grandes écoles, they too develop a taste for a career and begin in their early twenties to face the prejudices of men. Despite this opposition, North American women in 1968 achieved 33% of master’s degrees, 13% of doctorates, representing 37% of the working population. The movement is launched. In a few years, all industrialized countries will be affected: Europe, Japan, Australia. And everywhere these intelligent women are starting to mobilize against male domination.

Two million years after the first cave rituals, women are rediscovering that patriarchy oppresses women just as the capitalist exploits the worker and doubly extorts women through unpaid domestic work and wage discrimination in the workplace. The “second sex” discovers “the politics of the male. » (De Beauvoir / Millet). The imperialism of the animus must be fought everywhere. The imperialism of the animus must be fought everywhere. The return of the anima and its muse the Earth-mother is needed to remedy the situation.

The work of Mary Beth Edelson precisely aims to link women today to the great myths of the hidden history of women. This approach aimed to create a positive image of the woman in control of her destiny based on the primitive worship of nature and of the mother goddesses who came to correct the errors of culture. In the same vein, Carolee Schneemann takes the great symbol of the woman-snake and updates it in a daring performance entitled the *interior parchment* ; a long ribbon of text hidden inside the vagina that the artist unrolls and reads like a feminist oracle. The metaphorical allusion to the woman giving birth to the serpent as a symbol of her sexual potency is obvious.

Google-image / Edelson goddess head
Google-image / Schneemann interior scroll

Like the Third World peoples who dream of emancipation, they undertake to permanently sever ties with the male establishment. Like the boy of the post-war 1914-1918 who by shortening her hair and her skirts committed a political gesture of emancipation towards the fatal “vamp”, the woman of the 1970s adopted public demonstrations as a strategy. Miss World gala parodies, topless carnival parades for the joy of the media, this taste for derision does not mask the seriousness of the demands, the main one of which is the appropriation of one’s body; *Our body - Ourselves* being the bestseller of the time.

The sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, pre-AIDS, was marked with the seal of hedonism, the Indian kama-sutra replacing Mao’s *red book* . Books like *The Sexual Revolution* by Wilhelm Reich were a resounding success. There was no doubt the world was going to change right now. Moreover, Reich went there with a most radical analysis when he affirmed that “sexual repression produces obedience and therefore inhibits revolt”. Making love, disinhibiting oneself, letting off steam became a revolutionary task in the struggle against political oppression. The conservative thinkers of the time, who cried out heresy, were right.

“The Swabian heretics in the XIIIth century, until Ranters XVIIth , the same view continues to be expressed: for subtle in mind, sex can not in any way constitute a sin. (...) Some followers attributed a transcendent, quasi-mystical value to the sexual act itself when it was performed by their peers. The *Homines intelligentiae* called the act the delight of Paradise, and again acclivity (a term used to describe the ascent to mystical ecstasy) ; and the “Friends by the Blood” of Thuringia considered it, in 1550, as a sacrament, the “Christerie”. (...) As Ranter Clarkson said: “Until you have accomplished this so-called sin, you are not delivered from the power of sin .” (Cohn, *The Fanatics of the Apocalypse*, 1962, p.192)

The sexual energy repressed for generations if not centuries exploded with such suddenness that the shock wave quickly reached all social strata leaving speechless all retorts of reactionary religious and secular movements. Love, not just physical but revolutionary, had a rendezvous with history. Surrealist happenings and fluxus performances become places of sociocultural protests by addressing themes such as sexual orientation, male / female relationships, sado / maso erotic with mutilations and bodily scarifications with the obvious aim of freeing the impulses repressed by the culture. . In *Meat Joy* , men and women entangled on top of each other caressed each other with organic materials : raw fish, chickens, sausages, a striking living picture characteristic of an erotic rite celebrating the flesh as material for liberation.

Google-image / Meat Joy

Now “comfortable in her skin”, modern women let themselves be intoxicated by the illusions of the most alluring advertisements. Master of her body, her mission is to free it from millennia of oppression, frustrations, repression. The sexual act becomes the carrier of a major performance of the liberated body, enjoyment therefore becomes a necessity, there is no longer any question of looking like those old bigots from another century. (Ariel Colonosmos, *The Rebel Century*) In *Death of a Chicken* , the artist Ana Mendieta takes up a primitive purification ritual reserved for the boy during which a chicken is sacrificed whose spilled blood symbolizes the enthronement into society. It is by transgressing the codes and the macho taboos that the woman will find her true identity.

Google-image / Ana Mendieta chicken

At the same time, formed as a collective of women, the activists discover through their speeches that the lack of sex education, rape, sexual assault are responsible for many unintended pregnancies which often end in clandestine abortions that put their lives at risk. Faced with this observation, women invade the courts of justice and politicize the debate by demanding the liberalization of abortion and contraception and increased criminalization for the crimes of rape and aggression as well as the right to divorce.

Google-image / Ana Mendieta rape scene

An important judgment, handed down by the United States Supreme Court rec-

ognizing the right to abortion, marks the climax of the protest movement and its biggest victory. A decade of combat will have served to radically transform Western society, family ties, social relations at work and in leisure time between men and women. The 1980s mark a relaxation of claims now that the struggles have borne fruit according to Sylvie Chaperon, in *Le siècle rebelle*. Fatal error. The militant body that wanted to radically break the alienation of the commodity body and its corollary, the commercialization of pleasure, was remarkably taken over by advertising and the world of entertainment. Obsessed by “the obligation to exhibit oneself in order to be able to be”, a narcissistic drift of hypersexualized feminism sets in and contributes to distancing performances from their origins. We then witness a spectacular diversion of all the counter-cultural symbolism towards the entertainment industry, the ancient goddesses with an ecological flavor become hypermediatized “Spice Girls” whose sole purpose is to put back on the path of the consumption of many lost young girls.

This vision of the new woman found its peak in the advertising of the fashion industry, cosmetics and cosmetic surgery from the years 1970-80 and declined more and more to sink into pornographic self-denial.

Obscene body.

The 1980s woman forgot who she was dealing with. Since prehistoric times, the male has understood and controlled, as the first pimp, the market value of sexual desire and the woman has forgotten that she always carries with her the phantasm of the commercial temptation, ie to sell herself to the highest bidder. The history of art has clearly demonstrated this. The woman has always accommodated herself well to her subversive role, magnified by the artist who is both voyeur, pimp and often “client.” “

From the beginning of the XXth century, the subtle and sensual drawings by Gustav Klimt give birth to the “vamp” worldly, voluptuous femme fatale. Then, the brothel, lust, pornography cross the main door of the artists’ studios. It is no longer a question of the ethereal bodies of ancient Greece or of the sensual bodies of the romantics, but of the exhibition of the organs of copulation in all the crudeness of the sexual act.

Google-image / Klimt
Google-image / Grosz

The photography in all its truth brought an eroticism at first naughty, more obscene later. Integrated into mass culture, erotic magazines have created a market value for increasingly daring sex. The breasts and the buttocks acquire an inordinate erotic value, identical to the prehistoric Venus; the evolution of the feminine swimsuit from the Belle Époque to the bikini of the 1950s confirming it.

From the Paleolithic, statuettes appear with voluminous breasts, vulva, prominent hips and buttocks represent, in many respects, the dark background of the sexual world and mark man’s obsession for feminine attributes to the point of

deforming them. Verry much. This deformity of the breasts and the vulva is all the more noticed as the facial features are absent from prehistoric Venus. Whether it is the *Venus of Willendorf*, the *Venus of Lespugue*, the *Venus of Laussel* and finally the *Venus of Montpazier* with the particularly developed vulva, we notice that the “face is a uniform surface, without eyes, without mouth and without ears”; all the gaze is centered on the genitals and nothing else. These Venus are the erotic vestiges of the young and discreet primitive pornography.

Google-image / Venus of Willendorf and others

“The Paleolithic characters of the human image are found in the other prehistoric arts of the planet and help us better understand the nature of the duplication of the human being that constitutes the human image. Human sexuality occupies an essential place in the birth of artistic creativity. The graphic or plastic female representation is treated differently from the male representation. (...) A peculiarity linked to the previous one is the frequent absence of head (face), arms and feet in female representations, sculpted or engraved, and this at all times of the Upper Paleolithic. » (Jean-Pierre Mohen, Arts and Prehistory, Éditions Pierre Terrail, Paris, 2002, p.186)

“But two recurring themes run through this (parietal) art, (...) one is the power and the grace of the animals that these peoples trapped or hunted: the bison, the hairy mammoth, the deer, the horse, the ibex; the other is the wonder and the mystery of sexuality, centered on the genitals of the woman, (...) offering us a wide distribution of images of female nudes, with the interest centered on the vulva, the breasts, the buttocks, all this enlarged, inflated, in many figures ... “ (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine* 1973, TI, p.163)

Everything becomes clear when we know that the representation of animals symbolizes the desire for possession of the animal during a successful hunt. Ditto for the vulvae and the breasts, the hunter wishes to possess them in the same way as the animals, to draw from them the power of their mysterious force of attraction. All the more obvious, as often, the genitals and the animals are part of the same pictorial scene. What the artist David Salle delivered brilliantly with his *Nu au cochon*.

Google-image / Room naked to the pig

“Here we find ourselves confronted with the contradiction of an intensely masculine society, whose major occupations excluded women except in their secondary capacities of butcher, cook and tanner of skins, and which none the less raised female functions and abilities, her faculties of sexual pleasure, reproduction and child rearing up to a point where sexuality took hold of the imagination as never before. » (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine* 1973, tI, p. 164)

Moreover, even today, any “conscientious” hunter will confirm that the bar of dancers is part of the ritual of any successful hunt.

“Girls with their thighs open on the edge of a platform, (spectators) admitted to

sticking their noses, their eyes into the girl's vagina, to see, to see better - what? - climbing on top of each other to access them, the girl talking to them nicely all the time, for that matter, or rebuffing them just for the sake of it. All the rest of the show, flagellations, reciprocal masturbations, traditional strip, disappears in front of this moment of absolute obscenity, of voracity of the sight which goes far beyond sexual possession. Sublime porn: if they could, the guys would engulf themselves entirely in the woman - exaltation of death? » (Baudrillard, *De la seduction*, 1979, p.52)

Once again, man appropriates a feminine force to the point of completely devaluing it: henceforth the blood ties between man and his totem will be transmitted (initiation rites) from generation to generation, from father to son: some blood.

In short, the first societies of men of primitive hunters set up a general "philosophy" of life, a culture of domination where spiritual, political and warrior powers are in the hands of men in search of power. In fact, consult the only statistics of the United Nations concerning women and children in the world at the beginning of the third millennium.

Women and children represent 80% of those injured or killed in wars, much more than the military. Domestic violence is the most common form of abuse against women: a third of them have been brutalized by their husband or partner. One in five women in the world has been raped. Forty to 60% of victims of sexual assault are girls under the age of 16, and 130 million women are circumcised worldwide. Seventy-five to 80 percent of the world's 50 million refugees are women and children. Women are the first victims of human trafficking and sexual slavery. Women represent 70% of people living below the poverty line in the world even though they represent 40.5% of the global workforce. Fifty-seven percent of young girls will never attend primary school. Sixty million women a year are wiped out through gender-selective abortions. Four hundred million children do not have access to safe water, 270 million do not have access to any health service, 11.8 million adolescents aged 15 to 24 are currently living with AIDS. One in two children lives in poverty, i.e. one billion out of 2.2 billion children in the world, 250 million work and 60 million in intolerable conditions of serfdom to repay debts and often forced into prostitution and 640 million children are born, do not have a home or a home. (Source: *Refugee Review*, volume 1, number 126, 2002, WHO, UNICEF, 2005)

The majority of women on this planet are even more abused than the monkeys by the dominant ape. "Educating a girl is like watering the neighbor's garden. According to this maxim, 90% of the 3.5 million abortions in India are aimed at preventing the birth of a girl. India joins China and North Korea in the club of mass elimination of girls. Vicious circle of this practice: the emergence of a trade in sex slaves of young women and girls in regions where both mistresses and wives cannot be found.

This upsurge in targeted abortion of female fetuses is the result of the tremendous increase in the dowry demanded by the husband's in-laws. Originally, the dowry belonged to the bride and was to be used by the bride in an emergency.

Over the centuries, the payment of the dowry has been requisitioned by the in-laws thus accentuating the power of the women of the husband's clan over the intruder. The foreigner is at the same time and doubly subject to the despotism



of the men and women of her new family. When her husband dies, she often has to remarry the deceased's brother in order to keep the dowry within the clan.

The long process of dispossession of the physical and psychic attributes of the woman continues its course. Man ultimately must possess all the forces of nature including those which nature has bestowed on woman. And art is no exception.

"Does this mean that since the origins of art and until today, in the field of sex, there is nothing new except the technique and the way of treating shapes and colors ? (...) It is because the artists themselves, today as yesterday, remain sacred chauvinists who deny women the right to initiative, the right to want, to decide, to do. At best, the woman who has always ruled the visual arts - and we are delighted - was only an object of desire, an inflatable doll that the artist could do all that she could. he wanted. Sometimes a servant with La Tour or a duchess with Goya; odalisque (slave) with Ingres and Matisse or exotic fruit with Gauguin; landscape with Masson or pin-up with Warhol, we have seen him haunt churches with Van Eyck, cook with Greuze, hold a salon at Boucher's, frequent Fragonard's alcoves, welcome Toulouse-Lautrec to the brothel, share his bathtub with Bonnard or Wesselmann. The advent of the modern era has hardly benefited him. We especially strove to destroy little by little this body which served as a reference for beauty, to transform it, to simplify it, to lengthen it, to flatten it, to bloat it or to make it burst. We hesitate between the skinny and the swollen, the monster or the beast. » (Gilles Néret, *Erotic art*, 1993, p.10-11)

Fantasized body.

Feminist body art of the 1960s and 1970s rose precisely through an artistic approach focused on authenticity against all these stereotypes that degraded the role and image of women in the West. In terms of ideas, the 1980s marked the Western triumph of consumer society and individualism, in other words the body / ego is henceforth identified with the body / commodity. The authenticity sought at the beginning by body art inexorably slides towards the simulacrum body felt like a living painting intended to be seen. The claiming themes leave the world of visual arts to gain that of the performing arts; religious transgression, for example, gives Madonna. So much so that the real "authentic" body is

snatched up by the capitalist simulacrum of the idealized body, thus replacing the glorious body of religions, with simulation replacing representation.

Except that we are witnessing as much in substance as in form a gigantic cultural disguise where all differences, especially sexual differences are exacerbated to excess. Warhol fully embarked on this new social game followed by Urs Lüthi and Yohji Kusama.

Google-image / Urs Lüthi
Google-image / Yohji Kusama

Transvestites, homosexuals, drug addicts, brilliant psychopaths, all the Warholian underground of the *Factory* is found formalized by the media in need of stars. Warhol becomes a social figure just like Jackie Kennedy, he achieved what he wanted most : to be a brand as well known, in America at least, as Coca Cola. Warhol is a self-proclaimed artist whose direction is taken on by Warhol the narcissistic publicist. In this sense, Warhol is the consecration of the dandyism that Baudelaire described in these terms : “It is above all the ardent need to make an originality, contained within the external limits of propriety. It’s a kind of cult of oneself ...” Pierre Molinier’s self-portraits are part of the register of exacerbated dandyism . In *The Sting of Love* , Molinier projects himself in the image of the hermaphrodite as a “sacred perfection” which he offers to his voyeuristic eyes. Woman’s mask, makeup, corset, fishnet stockings and garters and stilettos, so many erotic accessories with which the artist adorns himself to better dispossess the woman of her power of seduction.

Google-image / Molinier sting of love

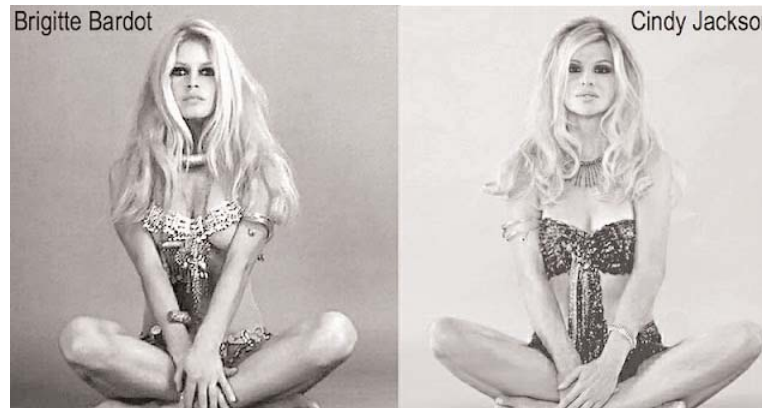
An oversized theatricality is now exposed since advertising, by becoming the preeminent art of the last century, imposed its law. So much so that the militant body of the 1960s sank into advertising disruption as if freedom had turned against itself to impose new and equally restrictive standards. Artists like Cindy Sherman, Robert Mapplethorpe, Hannah Wilke, Jeff Koons, Mariko Mori all go to celebrate the artificial where the fetish body is reduced to its only artificial expression.

Google-image / Jeff Koons
Google-image / Mariko Mori

“If I had a clitoris, I would get hard.” (Toni Denise)

The feminist movement had not foreseen, moreover could it foresee it ?, that the total liberation of the woman would end in the complete disappearance of the mother, - her sacrifice? - ousted by the techniques of reproduction in favor of

the sterilizing sexuality of porn. From the prehistoric rituals that man aspires to dispossess woman of her creative power, the day has finally arrived for the ultimate conquest.



I spent £20,000 to look like Bardot

“The last word cannot be left to nature: this is the fundamental stake. This exceptional grace, innate, immoral like a cursed part, must be sacrificed and immolated by the enterprise of the seducer, who will lead it by a learned tactic to erotic abandonment, where it will cease to be power. of seduction, that is to say a dangerous power. (...) In any case, something is given to the woman, which must be exorcised by an artificial enterprise, at the end of which she is dispossessed of her power. (...) It is always the story of a murder, or rather of an aesthetic and sacrificial immolation ... “ (Baudrillard, *De la seduction*, 1979, p. 136-140)

The modern icon of the woman dispossessed by the man of her motherhood is the drag queen, “that fairy gone wrong”, as the triumph of sterile hyper-femininity. These Greta Garbo, Mae West, Madonna or Marilyn Monroe, are as many mutants who, under pretexts of “celebration of the woman in them”, nevertheless considers her as the rival to be pushed out of their way, to be eliminated from the map.

The drag queen symbolically prepares the ground for the ousting of woman as a “biological matrix”, natural, in favor of the triumphant advance of the cybernetic, artificial matrix. Toni Denise is the perfect trans woman: “big breasts, narrow hips, jet black hair falling to the shoulders and long Barbie legs”. Toni Denise is the playful body where “Disney world becomes flesh”.

“She is a man who built himself into a woman with a man’s technology, for the pleasure of men. (...) The goal is the elimination of biological women. Kill all competing objects of desire ... ” (Steve Kurz speaking of Toni Denise quoted in *Virtual Speed*, p. 272)

“I don’t think about women at all. That’s why I lift men so easily. “ the transsexual will say. “Once she became a woman on the outside, she was able to take on the seduction of the male psyche and become the male spirit that colonizes the female body”. (Rosonna Albertini in *Aesthetics of media arts*, volume 2, p. 429)

In such a spectacular context, the taking into account of a desiring body, of a sexual body, of an eroticized body will be assumed by the market economy. “If mass communications harmoniously and often surreptitiously confuse art, politics, religion, philosophy and commerce, they nonetheless reduce these cultural domains to a common denominator : the market form. “ (Herbert Marcuse, *The One-Dimensional Man*, p.90)

Festive body

“To dance is to move forward. “

“The strangeness and the comedy of the situation in which we find ourselves : for the first time undoubtedly in history, we live in a generalized climate of non-conformist conformism. » (Yannick Roy, L'inconvenient, 2002)

Guy Debord, member of the Situationist International, cultural and political avant-garde of which he was the leader from 1957 to 1972, proceeded to a critique of art said to be “recovered” by the commercial system giving rise to the theoretical work major titled *La Société du spectacle* , published at the end of 1967, a few months before the events of May 68.

In *La Société du spectacle* , Debord had developed a regular critique of capitalism. “The spectacle is capital at such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image,” he says. Taking up Marx and Lukács, he develops the idea according to which the worker is alienated in the face of the objects he produces. This is the principle of “commodity fetishism.” For Debord, the society of the spectacle appears when the status of commodity extends to all human activity. This means that the relationships between individuals are mediated by objects and that this form of exchange has entered all spheres of society, even in private life. The spectacle thus represents the form of organization of capitalism in which social relations are mediated by images, by commodities and by consumption.

May 68 could have slowed down this movement, but the meeting with history did not take place. May 68 failed, in particular because the claims were taken over mainly by advertising. May 68 became a fashion like any other, “the spectacle therefore continued to strengthen everywhere. The protesting students became the future cadres of capitalism in no way capable of fulfilling the decisive role of liquidator of the system that they once hoped for. (Sylvie Goupil, Guy Debord, Nicolas Sarkozy and Mai 68, www.ledevoir.com, Edition of Saturday 03 and Sunday 04 May 2008)

“Life is too short to dress sad. “ (Advertising slogan)

With Fluxus, we are witnessing the advent of the spectacular integrated into culture, it is the generalized funfair. Art becomes a spectacle of trinkets, of crafts in an uninviting artistic coating “since in any case our decisions will never change the course of the universe. So much to laugh about it. Fluxus will remain faithful to its original utopia: through devastating and provocative humor, literally exploding the limits of artistic practice, abolishing the borders between the arts and building a definitive link between art and life. But the fluxus credo was also quickly recovered by the major boom in advertising and the entertainment industry in the 1980s.

It is at this moment that the disco entered the daily life and the dance, with this music which combined a hectic rhythm with a languid melody, became again instinctive. The body was glorified again; the dance was again revealing of the culture of the spectacle which gave it birth. It is here that the phrase “everyone

is an artist” of the Fluxus movement becomes prescient. The phrase “Everyone is an artist” simply means that man is an imaginative being and that he can produce as a creator and in many ways. We no longer want to change the world, we want to profit from it; have fun. Life is like a “pub” with pretty girls, handsome guys, who drink, have fun, dance and fuck ... all the time. Our slogan: “have fun, get high, have fun.” “

“All, I wanna do, it's have some fun. I got the feeling, I'm not the only one. “ (Sheryl Crow)

With “ecstasy” delirium, festive events and programmed trances, the raves took over from the rebellion. Rebellion is now the routine of the mechanical gesture; as well say that the rebellion has been liquidated. We make the revolution by celebrating. “The politic of dancinc, the politic of feeling good. » (Reflex) Youppie!

Art is democratized, individualized. Rebellion for rebellion is like art for art. Nothing is art and rebellion since everything is art and festive. Ultimately, nothing is celebration anymore since everything is festive. *Love Parade* in Berlin, *Gay Pride* in New York, *Carifesta* in Montreal, new technologies and festive affirmation of minorities come to erase the leaks in the social shell preventing shipwreck. The demonstrations of anti-globalization activists as in Seattle, Quebec, Turin, Davos or Gleneagle are nothing more than parentheses in the great celebration celebrated daily. In this sense, the rave dances, despite their gigantism, celebrate much more the community liquidation of the hippie festivals and its mutation towards the individualism of personal enlightenment where each one is solely responsible for his salvation like the rave dancer alone in the middle of the crowd. Raves are the places where revolutionary thoughts come to die. (Bigot and Fargier in *The Rebel Century*)

Ultraliberalism needs subservient, humble and submissive individuals who consume what they are told to consume and porn is part of the “new deal.” “Deleuze saw that the body / Renaissance machine can find its purpose until the complete body will be gone, leaving only a series of organs wishing : pornography.

Humiliated body.

How can we understand that sex shops have multiplied so much since 1960 in parallel with the rise of feminism, how can we understand the dazzling explosion of hundreds of millions of pornographic sites in the 1990s ? How to understand that at the height of feminist demands, many artists and members of the intelligentsia of the time, including cultivated women, came out, under the pretext of censorship, in the defense of pornography and theaters. cinema and movies rated XXX ? (The XXX industry enjoys an annual global budget that exceeds 100 billion dollars) If not that it is almost impossible to limit the social impulse generated by the “fashion of the day.” But what is hidden behind these images, what discourse do they have with society? Otherwise, once again, the obvious discourse of the “historic defeat” of the female sex.



It's a porn world, baby ...

A large part of Picasso's work revolves around the representation of the woman often abused to the point of cruelty in portraits which disfigures and deconstructs the human face. He is not the only one.

Obscene sculptures of female nudes (Rodin), agglomerates of monstrous breasts welded to a giant vulva (Lachaise), blasphemous and filthy writings (Aragon, Miller), female bodies transformed into bandaged penises (Tanguay), burlesque drawings of coitus (Picasso), drawing of his future wife fucking with her best friend (Dali), sodomy initiation drawings (Brauner), surrealist drawings of women showing off "their" phalluses and an eye deep in the vagina (Bellmer), self-portrait of masturbation (Schiele), photography of cross-dressing, fetishism (Molinier), sadomasochistic fist fucking, (Mapplethorpe), androgynous beings, necrophilia, coprophagia and other pathological sexual perversions (Witkin), pedophilia with young girls (Gette), pedophilia of women with young adolescents (Klossowski), mother photographing her own pre-pubescent young daughter decked out in fishnet stockings, showing off her sex and her anus (Ionesco), fabric-banner "I think therefore I suck" (Messenger), old woman all e pleted showing off naked in a park (Fischl), sausage in the anus and sexual act on a bed of minced steak (Mac Carthy). So many painters, sculptors, performers, photographers, filmmakers, writers that you will find, for the most part in the catalog of the exhibition "*Féminin-Masculin, le sexe de l'art*" at the Center Georges-Pompidou (1995- 1996).

All the psychological reality repressed by the social constraints of the woman-object is laid bare in the *Crucifixion* of Niki de Saint-Phalle. This crucified woman, with her arms cut off and an ecstatic face, expresses all the humiliating ambiguity of the female condition. All stereotypes pass there. The crucified one is both a mother, as the toys she carries on her breast indicate; a whore whose spread legs reveal a pubis of black wool; a "granny" with her curlers in her hair; a high fashion mannequin dressed in colorful patchwork-like fabrics; finally the whole gives the image of the woman as an unknown martyr.

Google-image / Niki Saint-Phalle crucifixion

The political and legal victory that women have obtained has gone to their heads to the point of losing control of their bodies, especially their social image. Because what the aestheticism of women's magazines, porn films and several artistic works suggests is that the woman, socially speaking, has become the object of collective enjoyment of the sterile orgasmic. The bodies of women who want to belong to themselves are once again dispossessed by the same male spirit of prehistoric times: the fear of motherhood as a sexual power that escapes us.

"In the past, a woman's breasts were used to feed children, today they are used to feed filmmakers. " (Jules Romain)

It would have been astonishing that at the beginning of the third millennium, that sexuality was the only dimension to remain outside the domination of man. The illusion of modern or postmodern times is to believe that sexuality has finally reached its "ontological fulfillment." We forget too quickly that capitalism is above all a system which transforms all reality into commodities and capital, including spectacle-sexuality. So much so that we can say that libertarian demands of a socio-political nature, mainly supported by feminism such as the right to abortion, marriage or adoption for homosexuals, the methods of artificial procreation for example, have were undeniable gains. On the other hand, feminism lost the battle for sexual liberation simply because this battle was fought on the land of the capitalist laws of supply and demand where women have always been and still are exploited today : 1 was sexual liberation was recovered and diverted by a market whose mechanical porn is the epitome.

How is it that a thought structured around individual freedom submits to the laws of the market and neo-liberalism ? Pornography has gradually evolved into a new way of dictating sexual conduct, as strongly as in the old system except that porn is far from being a sign of liberation.

Isn't it curious that fellatio, sodomy and interrupted coitus, that is to say the three ancestral practices of sterility, are the central point around which the whole "scenario" of the porn film takes place, ie the celebration sterile semen and ejaculatory penis. The role of the woman, rather the body of the woman becomes accessory no longer of the coupling but of the masturbation. The purpose of straight porn is a man masturbating while watching the image of a man masturbating in and on a woman's body.



"Women are the interchangeable instruments of an always identical pleasure. " (Proust)

"By thus linking themselves to porn as a transgressive practice, the man and the woman have led to the logic of being enjoying himself; hence the sadness emanating from this universe, eroticism sinking into the silence of solitary practices.

Because porn intrinsically offers in itself a dark figure playing more the game of tyranny than that of freedom.

(...) we paid ourselves girls only to see them up close
little dyed blondes, wild brunette with big rings
some Englishwoman with beautiful thighs, always a negress dancer, black of a certain age, tall chestnut with gray locks,
all those long hair equally interesting, a jewish
with breasts marked québec, as if we wanted to own all those round shafts, all the superb curves for a collection
valuable, a albugineal harem like an aviary. “
(Josée Yvon, Mamluk-dancer, VLB Editor, Montreal, 1982)

Sexuality follows the development of society except that with new technologies, it is ahead of it and often influences it deeply. The shift to computerized porn is shifting predominantly male desire towards the machine. Without physical contact with the feminine element, cybersex presents itself as electronic mental masturbation, the ultimate goal being a total fusion with the sexualized machine encouraged in this by the “spectacle society”, entertainment in the consumer society eliminating the kick the personal and emotional commitment to the other. The lonely body becomes a pleasure machine. McLuhan spoke of the phenomenon in a 1969 *Playboy* interview :

“The loving machine should be a natural extension (sic) of current trends in the near future - I’m not talking about computerized marriage agencies, but a machine that would produce supreme orgasm through direct mechanical zone stimulation.” brain related to pleasure. » (March 1969, p.65)

The last word goes to cyberpunk Mark Pauline quoted in *Virtual Speed* who remarked that “the true marriage of human form and technology is death.” “ (Dery, p. 238) Death of the biological body, death of the other, the couple finally here.

Obese body.

Thus the theatrically oversized, hypersexual body drifts towards the obese simulacrum. Obesity is a deformation, or even a deformity, of the healthy body as defined by the hygienic diktat of current Western societies. This unbridled consumption of food is no longer a sign of social well-being but a stigma of unease. The obese is also a mirror of our society in perfect harmony with the “lipid “ reality , a mixture of kitsch and junk food.

“Because the obese never breaks out, it decomposes from the inside under the influence of cancerous metastases which proliferate ad infinitum. Obese people never explode, they implode. (...) We are no longer in growth but in out-growth, We are in a society of proliferation, of what continues to grow without being able to be measured for its own ends, of what develops without regard to its own definition, the effects of which multiply with the disappearance of the causes, and which leads to a prodigious congestion of systems; (...) it is saturation which is fatal: it creates at the same time a situation of tetanization and

inertia. Striking is above all the obesity of all current systems ... (...) And the whole society starts to revolve around this point of inertia (...) It is no longer a crisis but of a fatal event, of a slow-motion catastrophe. » (Baudrillard, *Stratégies fatales*, 1990, p. 38-41)

“Maybe it’s the art of being obese? Maybe that makes me a work... But then, there are so many obese creatures in the world, like animals, people or plants, and there are so many obese structures in the world, like companies, bank accounts, properties, armies, cities...” (extract from the video *Fat House Talking*, *Am I a House?* by Erwin Wurm).

The *Fat World* exhibition by Erwin Wurm, with his bloated house, his shamallow cars, this green man and round as a pea, these bulging and inhabited pullovers ... nothing speaks to us, especially to us who are in accumulation until saturation : we eat our fast-food in a flamboyant baroque setting dotted with plastic palm trees, with Spanish-style marble-like stucco walls from which African or Balinese masks spring up, fifties-style checkered tiles separated by Moorish arches with Greek columns at the entrance to the toilets filled with neon on a fluorescent ceiling.

Like Dada and Fluxus, Wurm emphasizes the absurdity of everyday life. Through surprising stagings, bloated objects, on the verge of bursting, or incongruous action proposals, he invites the viewer to enter his universe that is both funny and scathing.



His latest works question the consumer society showing deformed characters, cars or bloated houses. The *Fat House* (2003) filmed on video wonders : “ Am I art because I am fat ? ” “ Despite the appearance of democracy,” says the artist, “we live under an increasingly strong form of economic dictatorship. Inequalities are growing and we are living in increasingly distant realities from each other. My work is closely linked to this observation. ” (Press release, Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon)

While the Colombian Fernando Botero is attached to the extreme femininity of fat women, from their maternal side, from their comfortable and reassuring appearance: the female archetype of prehistoric Venus still very present in the collective unconscious, the Australian artist Ron Mueck creates hyperrealistic sculptures of the human body, subverting the scales and proportions of its anatomy. The anomaly and the abnormality are very present in Mueck’s work, we

note a search for the deformity of bodies, both organically and psychologically, the two being linked. “Behind his clinical precision, a taste for the morbid shines through, through the decline of his obese and aging bodies accentuated by their abnormal dimensions .” (Wikipedia / Ron Mueck).

Ron Mueck’s sculptures are made with silicone, polyester resin and oil paint. They tackle various themes such as pregnancy, childbirth, birth, childhood, vigor, love, sex, loneliness, old age, death ... In short, so many stages that constitute a human existence. Mueck’s sculptures, if they are the reflection of a thing, they are that of our finitude.

google / image / Botero
google-image / Mueck

Drugged body.

“We’re smart enough to realize we’re stupid. » Anders Sandberg

Increasingly, depression is seen as a narcissistic wound linked to the individual’s sense of failure when confronted with heightened personal and social ideals. It is not so much the desire that is at stake as the difficulty of acting according to our expectations. Politically speaking, it is a disease of oppression that insidiously breeds hatred of oneself and that of others and ultimately the loss of all interest in life. Depression is the expression of a revolt internalized to the point of totally demobilizing the individual towards his society, centered as he is on himself.

In *four scenes of a rough life* , artist Ron Athey collapses in front of us by incising his body and then simulating the injection of an anti-depressant by inserting a multitude of hypodermic syringes between the wrist and the shoulder and finally, A 15cm long needle was inserted under the scalp, a way of “talking” to us about his depression and his suicide attempts.

Google-image / Ron Athey harsh life

“If no instinct, if no tradition tells him what he (man) should do, soon he will not know what he wants to do. “ (Viktor Frankl)

The question that arises today is therefore the following: If modern technocracy in its powerful historical progression does indeed seek to respond to aspirations as universal as the quest for spiritual truth, the conquest of nature, society abundance, creative hobbies, a balanced life, why not put up with it and take advantage of it; why are so many of us falling into depression? Why does the West and its standard of living of such superiority as never been achieved before in any other civilization offer the statistical picture of the highest suicide rate in the world?

“What is astonishing is that men contemplate this destiny and remain passive. Nothing is more disturbing in the world than human docility. Man is a wild animal, tamed, broken, who has been taught to walk in step, to respond to the crack of a whip. He accepts the goad and the kicks, the charity, the indifference and

the cynicism of his masters. Only the fact that history shows that we must not exceed certain limits, that too much suffering can engender a general revolt, only these melancholy thoughts save us from total despair. » (Read, The philosophy of modern art, 1988, p.125)

Why all this if not that this human life has been emptied of its substance and that it no longer represents the great adventure hoped for? That technocracy has upset not only the ecological balance but also the psychic balance on which the survival of our species rested.

“Come on, Hop! A little sincerity ... the world is in tears! “ (Jean Leloup)

We suspected that the ecological balance had been upset by human activity. But that the psychic balance has been upset by our consumer societies crumbling under wealth leaves one speechless; as if the price to pay of our person was too high to maintain such a social standing!

“The loss of meaning seems to be a loss of self, loss of assertion, loss of self-confidence. What happens when the mind becomes weak and therefore life becomes weak ? Existence seems to be crumbling. It’s as if everything around me is falling apart. My fingers slide on the wall of things and I can no longer hold on to anything, I fall, I collapse in anguish. The moment I collapse, things, objects, even people cease to have any meaning for me. If my existence doesn’t make sense, nothing makes sense anymore. I say to myself: “ what’s the point ? ” Ultimately, everything indifferent to me, everything disgusts me. No need to look very far for the prototype of this experience, it suffices to enter the experience of depression to experience and understand the collapse of the meaning of existence in absurdity. “

“But do we understand what existentially depression involves? Daily vigilance maintains the pressure, maintains tension, demands, it is always under the control of a duty to be. “Be careful. You owe this, you owe this, you will have this, you will have that. Take care of your future. You have to become someone” : the social pressure of psychological time. I myself am steeped in desires of all kinds, which draw me towards tomorrow and set me up in expectation. The future calls me and its call makes my present insignificant and my reality bland and inconsistent. It is psychological time, and consequently desire, which makes it possible to project an elsewhere. It is desire that projects forward the shadow of a possible meaning. I put my whole existence in a desire and... here is a stinging failure, a disappointment and all my representations collapse and lose their meaning. I find myself disappointed, empty. Pressure is followed by depression. And when, following a disappointment, the Force of life withdraws, the state of weakness appears and it is at this moment that the thought manifests itself: “ what good ... ”, “ all this does not make sense ”, “ if I had been different... If life had been different... but no, alas, I am only what I am ! ”. The mind judges and poses this existence which “ feels too much ”. The thought that says it wants to “ be other ” is a weak thought, it is a thought that arises from weakness and with weakness all interest is withdrawn and existence loses its meaning. » (Serge Carfantan, Philosophy and spirituality, lesson 8, 2002.)

Already in the XIXth century, authors denounced the insidious evil that prevents man to act. Too tormented by their salvation, the moderns forget to fulfill their political and civic duties, complained Chateaubriand. Alfred de Musset denounced a world doomed to material accumulation and Dr. Brouc to draw this conclusion full of good sense on the discomfort of souls: “We want what we cannot. Instead of taking an active part in the social movement, we prefer to lose ourselves in our narcissistic reveries. And our ramblings lead us to assert that we rigorously combat the norm whereas, on the contrary, we help to forge it, worse to embody it while presenting ourselves as a model of resistance except that we prefer to suffer rather than act. What is at stake is not the desire but the difficulty of acting to satisfy it.

Our aborted “thousand projects” have made us lose that little interior music necessary to make life dance and to ensure that the present does not slip through our fingers. We seek consolation and remission in the face of the failure of a “possible over-enjoyment as promised among others by advertising.”

“The self-medication concealed behind the broadening of the concept of depression is not a means of resisting today’s society, but an attempt to come to terms with it. (...) Hence, subsequently, this disposition to believe that what appears in the helpful guise of medical care necessarily proceeds from an admirable benevolence, from a humanist attention. This terrible naivety has consequences. The medical horizon is inserted and then blended into this optical illusion, now the instrument par excellence of propaganda relaying political questions and ideas to the status of chronological vestiges, of pleasant entertainment without real content or consequences. » (Christian Saint-Germain, *Argument*, vol 7, no 1, 2004)

“People with depression,” writes psychoanalyst Tony Anatrella, “tend to live in permanent mourning, and particularly in mourning for the sense of the ideal. The sadness of the depressed being to have taken himself too much as an ideal model. Yes, but we also tell ...

“It is said that at the beginning of the 1950s, the laboratory which had synthesized, somewhat by chance, the first antidepressant molecule refused to finance studies allowing it to be made into a drug. The disease was too rare for this to be a profitable project. » (Philippe Pignarre, *Mythologies today*, Nouvel Observateur, Special Edition, 2004)

Thirty years later, an international epidemiological survey shows that depression is the most common mental disorder in the world and appears to be the first pathology explained by social causes. What a long way since then: depression is now on the way to becoming the number one disease in the world: “the sick-

ness of the century. “



So what happened? The publication in 1970 of the DSM III (Statistical and diagnostic manual of mental disorders) led to an incredible reversal of psychiatric reasoning.

The reasoning changes as follows: it is no longer necessary to address the patient’s conflicts to decide on the therapeutic strategy and, in particular, on the prescription of drugs. So we come to treat the symptoms rather than the causes; to choose and identify such or such type of antidepressant for such or such a subgroup of depressed people.

In the cave era, the psyche was organized around the notion of the conscious (nature) and the unconscious (the spirits) as a coded language that one tried to decipher. The oldest texts of our civilizations have all testified that from the first reflections of man on himself, with consciousness also developed melancholy. From time immemorial, man has wondered about the human condition, aging and death. The Greeks, themselves, pose the problem of the evil of living of the melancholic as the very positive sign of a temperament which is the mark of genius while the depressive, darker is the work of an inner demon. Acedia, melancholy, black gall, spleen, the “evil of the century” has lasted for at least a thousand years.

“The fact remains that, whatever their forms, melancholy or the pain of living have been extraordinary sources of inspiration over the centuries. If we removed artistic and literary works inspired by melancholy from the cultural heritage of the West, we would be depriving ourselves of countless masterpieces. » (George Minois, *History of the evil of living*, 2003)

Today, deciphering mental information is a pure waste of time, the psyche is structured like a pharmacy organized around small pills, each novelty of which reveals an unexpected aspect of our psychic life: post-traumatic stress, resilience, moral harassment, social anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, etc. The psyche is the real goose that lays golden eggs in the pharmaceutical industry. (Philippe Pignarre, *Mythes Today*, Nouvel Observateur, special issue, 2004)

With the arrival of antidepressants, they must be sold, DSM III has transformed a “normal” state into pathology. By wanting to make man more efficient, we have weakened him. The following may seem so contrary to popular opinion that I prefer to rely on a recognized authority such as Elisabeth Roudinesco, vice-president of the *International Society of Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis* :

“We live in a world ravaged by scientism, where we are made to believe that sadness and neurosis are diseases. Our time lives in the therapeutic illusion, the illusion that we can cure everything. (...) The human being is made of passions, of the death drive and the life drive, of creation and self-destruction ... They

want us to believe that all of this is just chemistry, neuron, and that we will find the means to be permanently comfortable in our skin. But the psyche is a clever balance, a composite, in which the social environment also intervenes, and which is not reducible to the organic. (...) We cannot eradicate unhappiness or suffering. (...) Melancholy is a deep structure of the being which connotes a state which is not abnormal. It is not a disease, but it has always been described as a specific disease that belongs to human beings - we are dealing with an anthropological category and not necessarily pathological. There are incurable things in man. » (L'Histoire, no 285, p.54-55, 2004)

And we all experience inner suffering for our own reasons. This is the subject of *I'm too sad to tell you* by the artist Bas Jan Ader who sends in the form of a postcard photographs of him crying with the only mention of this cryptic sentence "I am too sad to speak to you . »By not wanting to speak about the reasons for his tears, the artist refers us to our own sadness, to this secret known only to us.

Google-image / Ader I'm too sad to tell you

"You won't go crazy, we are here! "

The medicine comes to the mouth like the host which purifies us. From lack to lack, the junkie with the mood formatted by the molecules of happiness lets his body drift without guilt towards illusory self-satisfaction. We are swimming in the midst of psychotropic feudalism.

From the rooftops, people sing to us that "everyone has had or will have a depression", a great career plan! To each their own pill, *ritalin* for children, hashish, pot, ecstasy for teenagers, *prozac* for adults, sleeping pills or *viagra* for the elderly.

"The Western subject is given over to his freedom within the framework of a commercial society without ideal, without commitment, marked by the decline of collective identities. A society also where we want to avoid all conflicts, where revolt is medicalized. If the subject is dissatisfied, he has in a way the choice between depression - cured by drugs which will make him return to the norm - and melancholy - which remains the expression of the singular revolt against the order of the world . " (Roudinesco, op. Cit ..)

In any case, on both sides, we need more and more psychotropic substances to function in contemporary civilization. This means that the environment we give ourselves, the ever faster rhythms that we undergo, the stress that we generate by our activities no longer correspond to the functions and natural adaptation mechanisms of our organism. The more we stuff the body with pharmacological or other remedies, the less we question the technocratic values ??of our societies. Take your *ritalin* and go to school, take your *prozac* and go to work. Taking drugs now rhymes with healing. We have neuropharmacology on one side for modifying human behavior and biotechnology on the other for gene modification of the "imperfect" subject. "

In *Rythme 2* , artist Marina Abramovic undertakes a daring performance aimed at raising awareness of the terrible vulnerability of body and mind under the influence of drugs. She began by taking medication for schizophrenia. Her body and mind being transformed by the action of these chemical substances, she began to comment on their effects to explain the phases of loss of self-control that she amplified by the absorption by a remedy for catatonia. acute that kept her sitting in a chair for six hours.

Google-image / Marina Abramovic Rhythm 2

"By focusing too much on personal health, we forget our collective health.

By dint of guilt, we perhaps forget to ask the real question: Could it be that Western technocratic society, like a sort of dictatorship of reason, is largely responsible for our inner distress?

Could it be that we are experiencing psychic upheavals comparable to previous climatic upheavals, a psychic glaciation typical of the postmodern era which, from melancholies to depressions in neuroses, leads us inexorably towards the new psychotropic totalitarianism which will free us from our "madness" existential? The renunciation of the love of the other, of the courage to be responsible, of the passion for combat in general to replace them with a pill or a pill shows the distress of an entire civilization.

By reducing our desires to the sole material horizon, Western technocracy also reduces our being to its sole material and mechanical dimension. Even more, by locking him up in the present, in the immediacy of his existence, technocracy cuts the individual off from his historical journey and replaces the memory of humanity with a void, "our idea of ??the human being. 'is entirely evaporated in favor of nothing "true" ideology of rupture and amnesia " (Plunkett, 1998). Such is the "last man" of Nietzsche, incapable of recognizing himself; "The last man is the one incapable of despising himself. "

We are indeed inside a catastrophe of spiritual, socio-political and environmental origin, but above all psychic. We lose the memory of our essence, the thread of our history.

"We are witnessing the emergence of a new type of social organization that will meet the needs of a new species of human being. Science will be able to achieve what totalitarianisms (both political and religious) have vainly sought to create: a new man. (...) If we trust one of the most famous actors of this movement, Raymond Kurtweil, author of a book entitled *The Age of Spiritual Machines* , it is the convergence of these technologies that will bring a radical transformation not only of man, but also of the whole sphere of life. » (Daniel Tanguay, Argument, vol 6, no 2, p.29, 2004)

"Run, run Lola run!" Ruin, all is ruin! "

Have you never been told that war is what most deeply affects the integrity of man, destroys him from within. Year 1990, the war in Iraq again, again, the

pogroms and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, Kosovo, other genocides in Rwanda, Somalia, Kenya. Once again, the hideous masks of the Dadaists come back to haunt us, again and again the dismembered and dissected bodies, littering the streets as in Picasso's paintings, again and again a population, you, me, taken hostage by madness and who running in all directions with his head in his hands and throwing his Munchian cry.

Thus continuing her research on the vulnerability of the body and psychological distress, consisting in particular in defying the limits of her body by subjecting it to various physical and psychological tests, Marina Abramovic enunciates in actions a multitude of concerns related to the contemporary subject, in her capacity of resistance within an alienating social, political or sexual game. She denounces the human tragedies resulting from wars by appearing at the Venice Biennale (Balkan Baroque, 1997) seated like a fallen goddess on a mound made up of 1,500 ox bones symbolizing the injured limbs that the artist is going to scrub, one by one. one, six hours a day for five days, a sort of purification rite to appease our own internal conflicts of self-destruction because we are not witnessing a revolution of consciousness towards more humanity but that towards more inhumanity.

Google-image / Marina Abramovic Balkan Baroque

And the pharmaceutical industry is still reporting record profits. So all is well in the best of all possible worlds, our technocracies thanks to the advances of modern science being able to cure our human weaknesses without failing to make us feel guilty via the increase in health costs for which we are of course collectively responsible. Extreme perverse effect when we see that society manufactures its own patients and that these same patients are ruining society through absenteeism from work and their ever-increasing use of the services of the health system and drug insurance.

“We can consider that the disease has become a new form of social refusal, an individual defection in response to a general malaise. (...) Being sick is no longer an accident but a way of life that offers an identity to those who, sometimes, have no other. It gives meaning to their life. » (Marc Ferro, *Sick Societies of Progress*, 1998)

This is the case with *Paysage viral* (Viral Landscape) by Helen Chadwick, enlarged images of cells in her body infected by a virus, superimposed on photographic enlargements of a maritime scene. Illness becomes the identity marker of the artist's personality. Suffering from chronic cystic fibrosis, lying on his hospital bed where he receives the public, Bob Flanagan presents his ailing and dying body as both the object of surgery and the subject of sadomasochistic performances. Finally, dying of lymphoma, artist Hannah Wilke “performs” to the end by photographing her body swollen by anti-cancer drugs. The photos are accompanied by stylized collages of the hair she was losing due to her



chemotherapy.

Google-image / Helen Chadwick viral landscape

Google-image / Bob Flanagan

Google-image / Hannah Wilke intra venus

Hated body.

In the mid-1960s, the “gore” phenomenon, also called “horror pornography”, invaded cinema. Blood gushes from the mutilated bodies then butchered by the tools of the average person : ax, chainsaw, electric knife. The disemboweled bodies, the viscera exhibited, the disarticulated limbs transform the living being into morbid remains.

Hated bodily humors (blood, urine, shit, semen, vomit, etc.) are used more and more to express the obvious degradation of the physical and psychic world as a result of human activity. The human body covered in garbage and grime wrapped in surgical bandages (Claes Oldenburg) lies in a nightmarish setting where hybrid creatures, half-mannequins, half-human, grotesquely sprayed with urine, vomit, and excrement (Cindy Sherman) evolve), while Otto Mühl in *Degradation of a Venus* , puts the archaic sacrifice of the young virgin back into fashion by throwing in a pig trough the bruised body of his victim soiled with garbage that he tramples to the point of stain complete as an act of catharsis, a sort of surrealist “still life”, asking forgiveness for the faults of contemporary man and of all future generations. These expiatory performances still exist since Christ on the cross (Serrano) is now submerged, ultimate transgression, in 14 liters of urine.

Google-image / Claes Oldenburg snapshots

Google-image / Cindy Sherman untitled 175

Google / image / Otto Mühl venus

Google / image / Andres Serrano Piss Christ

From now on, a whole culture of hatred of the organic is taking place. San Francisco, 1982, Cruel and relentless plot to subject the flesh of wild beasts to perverse treatment by the *Survival Research Laboratory* (SRL) group is a nightmarish staging of “organic robots” made of dried corpses of animals with their mouths clenched in a insane grin. The corpse of a dog mounted on a metal frame forms a grotesque sculpture, a morbid bestiary which has repelled many, especially the American society for the protection of animals. (*Virtual speed* , p. 130) Modern civilization has just revived the ancient practices of animal sacrifices which are no longer sacred but strictly fun.

Google-image / SRL

London, 1991, trendy citizens receive their invitation card for *Isolated Elements* . British artist Damien Hirst introduces himself, chainsaw in hand, attacks the head of the pig lying on the ground and cuts it neat in the middle. The two twin halves of the carcass then exhibit the design of the internal organs and flesh: fat, meat, bone, brain, jaws, teeth, tongue; a whitish substance drains from the

brain. Two years later, the artist does it again with *Mother and Child Divided* and presents cows, calves, sharks cut in their middle; carcasses bathed in formalin aquariums. With *Waste* in 1994, it's the turn of dead flesh, meat riddled with disease, pieces of corpses mixed with garbage and medical waste to offer us the sad spectacle of an animal staging where worms and other insects accomplish their decomposition work which can be followed "visually" during the exposure. (Florence de Mèredieu, *The Rebel Century*)

Google-image / Damien Hirst

No need to dwell too long on the performance of Chinese artist Zhu Yu, who in the year 2000 to celebrate the new millennium, commits the first act of cannibalism of the third millennium by offering himself a banquet of roasted human fetuses (stolen in a hospital) in order to perpetuate the centuries-old Asian tradition of tasting fetuses as the ultimate refinement.

Google-image / Zhu Yu eating people

"For me, a painting is a sum of destruction. " (Picasso)

"Neo-Expressionism, New Figuration, Free Figuration, Post-Modernism, New Fauves, Bad Painting, (...) smeared, vituperated, scoffed at, masked, the human body certainly becomes the theater of cruelty. More than ever, the attraction for figuration thus seems to be based on a dramatic perception of man, in which he appears fallen, weakened, castrated, finished. Ugliness and its excesses would seem, indeed, to attest to a specific fascination with the irremediable. I would like to cite a few outstanding examples: (you can obviously do a Google search / image to see the works)

- Baselitz, in scratching webs suitable for slicing flesh and silhouette, grabs capsize figures that he tears from the paper.

- Combas invents disjointed puzzles where dark circles and chromatic vituperations break up shapes and faces to teratology. (biological science of birth defects) <http://www.combas.com/>

- Basquiat delivers a grimacing and emaciated creature, eaten away by graffiti, tag splashes, rap songs, drugs, alcohol.

- Rainer attracted by the effigy of death, retouches death masks, corpses, mummies and crucifixions, with which he lacerates curves and rounded, impatient to bring the lure of a new life to them through an eager chromaticism of 'untimely.

- it's everyone who surrounds him who falls to Ensor: "Inhabited by an anthill of cirons, bodies, clothes, houses appear worm-eaten, gangrenous or covered with pustules. It is from the interior of beings that rottenness in the form of purulent acne and buboes belching out their pus. (...) Cancer takes hold at the very heart of the drawing. Man is condemned by time to degrade, so will colors be like a poisonous liquor which poisons with its destructive venom and opens the way to putrid decomposition like the degeneration of the flesh. » (Murielle

Gagnebin, *Fascination of ugliness* 1994, p.165)

- Garouste, pushing the expression of solitude to its peak, lengthens the silhouettes within a non-Euclidean space where man, deprived of landmarks, floats in a deep imbalance, as a victim of the wildest depersonalizations.

- Dieter Appelt sets the stage for the body as a mummy and offers himself as an offering to some pagan torture. Meditation of a body irremediably devoted to the misery of its condition without any promise of resurrection being considered. Alone in the face of death, period! (Baqué, *Faces*, 2007, p. 102)

- Joel-Peter Witkin handles the ellipse in hallucinating and perverse photographs, tearing the idols of art to pieces.

- Dieter Roth uses organic materials (curds, sausages, sugar, chocolate, animal excrement, etc.), able to manifest the random and the perishable.

- André Serrano, in monumental photographs in which he exhibits sections of human bodies, chooses the moment which forever removes the flesh from life. It is in the morgue that he practices his framing (reliquary or mutilation), worried about bodies burned, drowned or killed by iron, gun, death with a rat, or only curious about the subtle traces left by some malignant pneumonia or a nasty meningitis. Exalting the pictoriality of the skin, its iridescent transparency like its skillful grain to light up, it continues the passage of oozing and often colored materials towards the exterior of corpses, in the great tradition of the dead Christs. (the kenosis of Christ) And yet, here, voyeurism, in the time that it contaminates the always greedy eye of the spectator, upsetting the modest anonymity of bodies and respect for death, installs the scandal of scavenging connivance.

- Roy Adzak in thermographies, ultrasounds, x-rays captures the gaze that the machine has on man and, inevitably, he restores sumptuous skulls. (...) Anticipating the reign of computer-generated images, Adzak introduces the madness of the virtual.

- Karlheinz Biederbick handles the painted plaster of human dimension and offers obese individuals, sitting, naked on the edge of white bathtubs; their belly, deformed by fat, opens out into a series of flabby folds showing a shiny pink skin.

- Rebeyrolle values ??suicidal bodies, tortured bodies; the flesh is bloated, profuse bleeding. The sex appears, soiled by viscera and vomiting. In this work, the body screams its finitude and the material goes into convulsions.

- Luciano Castelli, Hermann Nitsch, like many others, lend a hand to Body Art, generalizing the use of animal blood in monumental masochistic mimes where the ritual of soothing obedience is transformed into a gigantic exaltation of dejection.

- Klaus Vogelgesang also exercises a very particular sadism (...) Sometimes

miserable wreck, his mouth pierced with a stake, a kind of crippled animal, sometimes erotic and ideological toy, connoted by a deadly vulgarity, man is affected as doubly: by the motif and by the line, here, acid and without mercy. » (Gagnebin, Fascination of ugliness, p.268-269)

This is how this art of the end of the century was illustrated against a background of putrefaction, AIDS, depression and other pandemics. We are resolutely postmodern. Postmodernism is the very tangible observation of the failure of modern progress as a grandiose story of our salvation through science and technology. A postmodern is someone who has understood that, faced with the bankruptcy of both political and economic institutions, nothing can be known with certainty, that History has emptied itself of the plausible options of “progress.” Perhaps no more postmodern than that, this famous photo of the Iraqi soldier tortured with his arms crossed, electric wires connecting him to his executioner. This photo of “Muslim Christ” transgresses and annihilates all the achievements of modern humanism and human rights. What are the benefits of modernity and liberal consumerism for, if they are experienced in a living environment deemed impoverishing, soulless, amplifying social unrest and our distress?

For the artists and writers of the postmodern movement, it is a question of “deconstructing” all the canons and standards of modern aesthetics in order to destabilize all of Western philosophy.

“The historical significance acquired by the ugly in the XXth century that the aesthetics of beauty is no longer primarily the basis of art. (...) A kind of familiarity with the ugly settles in man, day after day (the daily news bulletin on TV) so much so that the possibility of art as an intelligent vision of the beautiful disappears in favor of a concern for art as representing the values ??of hic et nunc (here and now). (...) The “martyrs” of our revolutionary century offer a jagged “beauty” ... “ (Gagnebin, Fascination de la ugliness, p.145)

The history of somatophobia is the common thread that explains much of the history of Westerners. Etymologically, somatophobia is hatred of the body, of one’s own body first and subsequently, of all other bodies. We are faced with the loathing of life. We must consider it as a genuine phobia, that is to say, as a manifestation of obsessional neurosis, or, in the words of Freud, of “hystérie anxieuse.”

Since the night of ancient times, man has experienced fear; fear of a vast, elusive, threatening world. It is suddenly the anguish, the shock, the revelation of a life in isolation, in a world without exit where the man is “condemned” to himself. The initial shock generating anguish makes the world odious (Heidegger), guilty of the heaviness of existence but above all it is the revelation of a force greater than man: “what is stronger than us, is it existence, to which we belong without recourse, and which determines us to be what we are, we who have asked for nothing. Fear and anguish which make the world odious, life execrable; this is the genesis of hatred!”

Fear leads to wickedness, to hatred against our origins. “Why would a healthy

mind die because the body is sick”? Desperate question which makes the body hateful since Descartes decreed the divorce between body and spirit. Bodily death is experienced there as a flagrant and alienating injustice, the “bottom line” of all theology.

“Hatred and evil are therefore one and the same”: the disease of being, of the existing one confronted with the despair of being oneself in this life, in this time allotted to us. The seductive world of the start has since metamorphosed, in the hands of the hateful man, into a world depreciated, soiled, leveled down, that is to say at human height. (Guérin François, Hatred and destruction, 2002)

The whole of the twentieth century is crossed, from its beginnings, by Futurism, Dadaism, Russian nihilism, Constructivism as so many prefaces to more than half a century of barbarism, fascism, Nazism and genocidal exterminations. The quintessence of the ugly, the abominable, is it not also the infamous nuclear bomb and its plan of total extermination, of which the ugly, the destruction in art would be the pale reflection. Once, when life is reduced to this impotent inertia, that Thanatos reigns definitively over Eros, why be offended that “the anti-life, the anti-order, the anti-intelligence, the anti-form dominate? Arts. » (Gagnebin, Fascination of ugliness)

Everywhere, we announce the end of something.

The End of Science with John Horgan:

“Considering the extraordinary successes of science in the XXth century, it is very unlikely that a scientific reach to transcend the current theories to develop a radically new way of thinking about reality. “

End of the social with Jean Baudrillard where in *L’illusion de la fin*, the real is nothing more than signs and simulacra :

“Neither spectators nor actors, we are voyeurs without illusion. We consume the ephemeral, the prestige, thus depriving ourselves of any true imagination; both perfectly informed and powerless, perfectly united and paralyzed. “

End of the company with Levy-Strauss in *Tristes Tropiques* :

“The world began without man and it will end without him. The institutions, mores and customs, which I will have spent my life inventorying and understanding, are a fleeting efflorescence of a creation in relation to which they have no meaning, if not perhaps to allow humanity to play its part. Far from this role marking him an independent place and from the effort of man - even condemned - is to vainly oppose a universal decline, he himself appears as a machine, perhaps more perfected than the others, working for the disintegration of an original order and precipitating a powerfully organized matter towards an ever greater inertia which will one day be definitive. From the time he began to breathe and to eat until the invention of atomic and thermonuclear devices, through the discovery of fire - and except when it reproduces itself - man has nothing does other than lightly dissociate billions of structures to

reduce them to a state where they are no longer susceptible of integration. No doubt he built towns and cultivated fields; but, when you think about it, these objects are themselves machines intended to produce inertia at a rate and in a greater proportion than the quantity of organization which they imply. As for the creations of the human mind, their meaning exists only in relation to it, and they will merge with disorder as soon as it has disappeared. So much so that civilization, taken as a whole, can be described as a prodigiously complex mechanism where we would be tempted to see the chance that our universe has of surviving, if its function were not to manufacture what physicists call entropy, that is to say inertia. “

End of man with Foucault in *Words and things* :

“Man is an invention of which the archeology of our thought easily shows the recent date. And maybe the next end. If these provisions were to disappear as they appeared, if by some events (...) , they were rocking, as did the turn of the XVIIIth century the ground of classical thought - then one can certainly wager that man s would erase, as at the edge of the sea, a face of sand. “ (Michel Foucault, 1966 pp. 396, 398)

End of man (bis) with Freud in *Le Malaise dans la culture* :

“The decisive question for the fate of the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent its cultural development will succeed in mastering the disruption of communal life caused by the human drive for aggression and self-annihilation. ... Humans have now come so far in the domination of the forces of nature that with the help of the latter, it is easy for them to exterminate each other to the last. “

and Murielle Gagnebin in *Fascination of ugliness* to conclude:

“From this disastrous panorama, where the fanaticism of fire, blood and the word strives to tear up the human figure, a general line emerges: in front of the incoherence of History, man, in turn, vulture and ciron, is thrown at the foot of the wall. Ready to admit defeat, crushed by the overwhelming march of ideologies, he contorts and screams and, with a last jump, offers his contracted face to the black and empty sky that he tears, one last time, with his helpless laughter. (...) No ideology, in its whirlwind and dust, its “demonstrations” and its banners, has so far succeeded in crushing the only irreducible human dimension, namely finitude. (...) We can draw the most fascinating diagrams of the biological and molecular organism, invent brazen supra-structures: one fact will always remain the same. The man in the situation - the one who writes, who listens, who reads - this man is destined to die. In the face of death, the silence of “-isms” is established. Thus in a world dominated by the intoxication of all “possibilities”, simple logic wants man to question his own finitude. “ (P.156)

Cyberculture is no exception to the rule. The shift from punk to cyberpunk is revealing. Remember that punk confesses a deep hatred towards the psychedelic universe and the hedonistic body of the hippie. Against the background of AIDS, liberating carnal love mutates into a deadly orgasm. The devastating

AIDS becomes an allegory of the decay of a terminally ill socio-political system. In this, cyberpunk is not alone. The whole cyberculture is crossed by currents of thought where the mind must definitively tame the body. Complete adherence to technology as a response to finitude marks the quintessence of the cyborg, of the electronic body as a futuristic utopia.

Utopian body.

It is this questioning of the finitude of the body which is at the heart of the concepts of the utopian body. This fantasy of the creative man crosses all eras since prehistoric times and Antiquity. “The artificial creature appears in the legend of Talos where a giant brass automaton watches over the coasts of Crete. And in the third century BC, a Buddhist legend relates that there existed “in the Kingdom of Roma ... engines carrying spirits” as well as mechanical men used as instruments of defense. » (Eastham, Interculture, notebook 145, 2003)

In this sense, the cyborg is not a recent invention of the 3rd millennium but the technological culmination of a recurring theme since the dawn of time, each era seeking to revive, to bring up to date the “previously known”. As Paleolithic statuettes were metaphors of god, man-made creatures are metaphors of man. So much so that we have gone from belief in a sacred statuette with the spirit of a god to the idea of ??a statue created by man and bearer of humanity. (Breton, In the image of man : from the golem to virtual creations, 1995)

The first “living” creature born of the human imagination (other than God himself will rightly say the atheists) is Galatea: a young man named Pygmalion carves in ivory a marvelous woman whom he wants for wife. Aphrodite’s intervention will give life to the statuette. We can see in this metaphor that a God gives life to a creature resulting from the imagination of the artist and that in this sense he endorses the desire of man to reach deity. But this story also shows that technology and art can be used to express male fantasies about the female body.

On the religious level, in the book of creation *Sefer Jazeera* Jewish inspiration, written between the III^E and the VIth century AD, appears a being (Golem) artificial man-made in clay and which comes alive thanks to the magic of sacred words. For the first time, the creation by man of an artificial being by a magico-religious practice is thus attested. It is thus in the Christian tradition of the creation of a little boy by Simon the magician to whom he would have given not only a body but also a soul. This detail is of considerable importance since at all times God was the one and only depositary and dispenser of the soul as the principle of life.

The appearance of the machine brought about a whole revolution of the artificial creature. From now on, it will be embodied in material reality. The explorers of the automaton movement of life will touch on all the components of the living world, from the animal to the mechanized android; we have seen in the body dissected and the controller body covering the period from the Renaissance to the XIXth century.

Subsequently, another step will be taken in 1816 when a young woman of nineteen, Mary Shelley writes a tale of scientific anticipation in which it is no longer a question of reproducing the reality of beings by mechanical movement but even more to know the secrets of life itself. It is therefore a doctor, Dr Frankenstein, that falls this heavy scientific responsibility. The doctor's artificial creature demonstrates that the profanation of the mystical body by biology is the obligatory path towards the advent of the messianic dream of sacred science. Science is therefore leaving the mechanics of automata to tackle the biology of bodies.

The island of Doctor Moreau by HG Wells followed in 1896, which featured hybrid creatures such as the hyena-pig, the horse-rhinoceros as well as half-man, half-animal creatures that broke the symbolism of the human and which eventually are drawn into their extinction by devouring each other. These transgressions are premonitory of future genetic manipulations as proposed by the *Symbiotica* group of Australia.

Google-image / symbiotica

In 1922, a Czech writer, Karel Capek, invented a new entity, an artificial being in the biological and chemical sense: the robot built on the model of man. In his piece *RUR* to designate the *Rossum Universal Robot* factory, the scientist Rossum creates humanoid entities in which the scientist Rossum has suppressed all the normal activities of a human to keep only those essential to his work. Inspired by Capek's work, science fiction author Isaac Asimov will attempt to portray robots more positively, provided they are programmed to respect humans. Subsequently, the birth of artificial creatures and super heroes with fabulous powers will form the framework and the wealth of incredible stories.

In 1945, the mathematician John Van Neumann created an "intelligent" machine which will be the basis of the modern computer. But in the minds of the promoters of computer science, the goal to be achieved is indeed to manufacture an artificial replica of the intelligent man.

It was the mathematician Norbert Wiener who, in 1948, synthesized all these projects by creating the cybernetics from which the cyborg comes, a mixture of Golem, automaton, Frankenstein, robot and computer. In other words, it is up to Wiener to have finally conceptualized in an entity more than two centuries of artistic, magico-religious, mechanical, automatic, biological and computer desire / research.

Cybernetics, from the Greek *kubernetes* meaning "pilot" of a ship, aims to compensate for human imperfections by creating corrective machines capable of controlling, predicting and governing.

"Breaking with the traditional human-machine dichotomy, Wiener offers a "human-mechanical" approach to society. (...) Whether it is a question of replacing an amputated limb or of calculating or processing information, intelligent machines constitute for him prostheses, extensions of limbs, grafts of instruments. Emphasizing the potential dangers of this situation, Wiener sees humani-

ty as entirely dependent on its prosthetics. » (Céline Lafontaine, *l'Empire cybernétique*, 2004, p.58

On this subject, contemporary cinema has taken hold of the experimental body of science and medicine to better make it cross the limits of death. With cyber-films such as *Robocop*, *Terminator*, cyber-theorists bring to life stories celebrating bio-mechanical fusion in a universe of disarray where the absence of typically earthly historical perspectives reigns. These scientist reveries are presented as a considerable evolutionary leap which will give birth to forms of life far superior to our own.

Man is thus confronted with his intimate mortal condition and it is because he despairs of being able to change his condition that man dreams of changing his nature, of leaving the biological world as the artist and the artist teach him. scientist of new technologies of virtual worlds. A rage of superhumanity rises against the natural.

The artists of *Survival Research Laboratory* have been the cyberpunk creators since the 1980s who invented large scale mechanical shows, real motorized psychodramas of insanely powerful power. A true mechanical circus, humans are absent, replaced by sheet metal machines and metallic robots which parade according to a computer-programmed choreography which suggests an electronic conditioning of the masses as if man were ready to accept all possible constraints. so powerful is his desire to transcend his physical body.

Google-video / Survival Research Laboratory

The human wants to tear himself away from the human, he wants the Impossible. So in *Terminator 3*, the TX android is the quintessential post-human. Pure spirit, TX is embodied in a futuristic body reconstructed from dead organs, a form almost identical to this mystical sublimation that ancient scholars called metempsychosis, namely the migration of the spirit, of the soul from a body to the other. We live in an era of extreme where our desires are radicalized : the man of the XXIth century does not want to die. Beating death is the main obsession of cyber culture. For today's young people, old age is a disease which must either be cured by drugs and genetic therapies or by fleeing outright the organic sphere responsible for the decrepitude of species.

Body design.

Performances as an experimental laboratory, we move on to the operating theater. The decreation of the body is not only a disincarnation but also a reinvention, a reincarnation, a multiplication, a vectorization, a re-genesis of the human. Avatar and metempsychosis.

Orlan's work is accused of surgical performance. Surgeons must operate in such a way as to reconstruct on the face of the artist a digitalized robot portrait composed of the forehead of the *Mona Lisa*, the eyes of the *Psyche* de Gerome, the nose of the *goddess Diana* of the School of Fontainebleau, the mouth of *L'Europe* by Boucher and the chin of *Venus* by Botticelli; in short, a

kind of carnal art work-in-progress intended to transform an ordinary face into a collage of famous features. By creating disturbing hybrids between his face and those of the canons of beauty, Orlan aspires to a profane trans-figuration, a remake of the transfiguration of the body of Christ into a mystical entity. This initiatory journey is a murder of natural identity, a sacrifice necessary for a rebirth of the artificial other.

Google Image/ Orlan

This search for identity involves cross-dressing, wanting to be different, to move from one identity to another, to transform if not to change society and to force these institutions to recognize the change. She attacks the Church in the first place by declaring herself holy Orlan while merging divine impulses with erotic desires. Then, she denounces the commercialism of art by disguising herself as a whore in contemporary art salons. Finally, it confronts the desire for identity change with new technologies through radical performance-operations with the aim of admitting to the public authorities to formalize this identity by obtaining all the necessary papers, numbers and formalities; in short, recognize the post-human. (Philippe Vergne, *En corps!* In *l'Art au corps*, 1996, p.33)

With Orlan, the monstrosity becomes the postmodern canon of beauty which consists in combating all that is natural where the ideal has become totally unnatural; the latter replacing the counter-culture of the years 1950-1970. From counter-culture to against-nature, a fine book title, isn't it?

In direct line with the Paleolithic, the contemporary work of art indeed symbolizes a kind of personal totem bringing "salvation" and for which the artist, like Pygmalion and his statue, devotes a cult of Redemption. By staging the body, art is democratized. The body / accessory is taken in hand, a real construction site, by a formidable industry of body design deified with a lot of advertising and marketing. From tattooing to liposuction through piercing and pubic shaving, the body becomes a branded mark, bearer of meaning, of belonging to oneself. The body thus magnified acquires all the symbolism of the talisman which protects identity while affirming it and, in fact, escapes indistinction, anonymity.

Body built.

The misshapen body forces science to question the normal body. In the XVIIIth century science of physiognomy and the measurement of the human body and its parts is taking place. The studies of disproportions seeking to fix the types of ugliness are coupled with studies on the ideal proportions, to identify the characteristics until amplified by cosmetics, fashion, exercises and even surgery. And this phenomenon has only grown over the centuries.

Cosmetic surgery responds to a narcissistic injury of the dissatisfied person and requiring repair. It is about making the body, especially the face, conform to the ideological standards of beauty of which we now know the incredible cruelty. Under the bandages, behind the bruises and stitches, a new identity looms, sometimes monstrous that it will be necessary to face. Television shows now program the remodeling of bodies as a symbolic and cultural construction of the

time. The disgraced natural body disappears under the staging of artifice. Being now rhymes with appearing.

Already, artists and followers of the cult of muscle advocate the transformation of the body through the use of electronics, new designs and new materials. Natasha Vita-More, a bodybuilder artist, considers the body as a new field of experimentation for fashion: "I would like to strengthen the power of my legs to walk in the mountains, to have a protective epidermal veil that would protect me from dangers specific to this environment, being able to cool my internal temperature and benefit from amplified hearing and vision, she explains in an interview with Spirale.org.

google-image / Cindy Jackson

google-image / Michael Jackson

In the same vein, actress Cindy Jackson has so far undergone more than twenty operations to look like the Barbie doll and another Jackson named Michael has meanwhile transgressed her naturalness to the point of monstrosity. These two "fairground phenomena" however reveal to us the emergence of a popular attraction for beauty products and cosmetic surgery. We arrive at a tangible superficiality in the cult of the image in a spectacular universe where we prefer the copy to the original, the simulacrum to reality. We live in the era of "junk works" of stooges, of showing off, such as ready-to-wear. We are amazed by this kaleidoscope of colors, synthetic shapes and at the same time, dazed by the lack of meaning of our "creations." "

We are witnessing the victory of the mechanistic conception of the body permeable to all techno-pharmacological experiments. All organs except the brain and central nervous system already have their artificial clones. This reduction of the body to a mechanism goes hand in hand with a transformation of the organs into commodities ; when will the organ stock exchange ?

The body has always embodied a certain truth of oneself in the face of the world. This was the case with the practices of bodily branding which acted as a revealer of identity and character. The 1980s saw the emergence not of the affirmation of his personality but rather the management of his appearance and even the simulation of his identity.

"Seduction considered as one of the fine arts" (Baudrillard)

So what will be the canons of postmodern beauty? It's simple ! "It is the crazy demand for a physical perfection that was once inaccessible" but now within reach thanks to pharmacopoeia, prostheses and synthetic images coupled with visualization software. This computer transformation technique is called morphing, an unprecedented diversion from the natural to the artificial. " (Baudrillard, *De la seduction*, Paris, 1979)

Diversion of natural desires towards the consumer product with the advertising spot, diversion of advertising processes towards self-propaganda, diversion of the body towards sacrificial rejection with body art, diversion of the cycles of

life towards perpetual youth with postmodernism and finally, as we will see, the diversion of biological life towards the cybernetic factitious with post-humanism.

From the physically constructed body, we move on to the artificially constructed body. McLuhan in *The Mechanical Bride* foreshadowed the bizarre fusion of sex and technology decades ago. Previously, at the beginning of XXth century, Marinetti, the father of Futurism, prophesied the mechanical eroticism represented Picabia in *Parade in love* (1917), Portrait of an engine valve evoking sexual copulation theme that the Dadaists ironised with their implementation in scene of rut and mechanized orgasm of an automaton race emptied of all spiritual existence. With *Automobile Fornication* (1914), the poet Mario de Léon describes a car accident as a coupling; idea taken up by Ballard in *Crash* which stages fetish love which cannot be realized outside the mechanical alcove of the automobile. Thus is born the post-modern “love” triangle of sex, technology and death.

“Today, McLuhan’s premonitory remarks on the ‘widely held confused image of sex, technology and death’, the themes of eroticized technology, machine-assisted sex, mating with technology and carnal desires deviating to culminate in orgies of high-tech destruction, all find themselves entangled in cyberculture. “ (Dery, *Virtual Speed*, p.196)

We know that the arrival of AIDS has considerably modified sexual relations, it is moreover at the same time that the sexual games, the erotic “cats” know an ever increasing popularity in the world of cybersex where each participant, as a bonus, can occur, narcissism obliges, in its best light. Henceforth the constructed virtual body will become a simulacrum.

Narcissistic body.

The artist’s vision becomes a fantasy of his personal universe in fusion with the world. The phenomenon of world music is a good analogy for this fusion. In this new musical movement, we only talk about sampling and sequencing, sounds, remixes of various music listed around the world. It is the copy / paste of computer software applied to art in general. It is the “cut off” in literature as proposed by the beatnik Burroughs where are juxtaposed bits of scattered sentences gleaned here and there in the dailies and placed on a musical track. In painting, it is the remixing on the canvas of organic elements of body art such as blood or shit and in sculpture, the introduction of fresh meat or viscera. This is the era of mergers, of convergence: dance / video / theater fusion for example.

Post-modern nomadism is the great cosmopolitan illusion. Stateless, citizen of the world, the post-modern subject continually wants to be elsewhere on condition that this elsewhere contains the minimum of comfort, security, in short, elsewhere must be a bit like home. We are no longer nomads since we travel the world as tourists strolling in an exotic souk smelling the lowest price as in any *Wall Mart* in this world. All artifacts are found on the shelves of the great global supermarket of humanity. The world is on sale

Personal identity follows the same path. Through cinema, song, theater, television and the arts in general, we are all looking for scripts that answer the questions of our time and models that can be integrated into the process of building our identity. We meet in front of the supermarket of all possible. So much so that today’s meaningful stories have multiplied into categories of all kinds, always touching more closely on personal and intimate concerns. (Chalvon-Demersay cited in *Invention of the Self*, p.152-153)

“Cleverly playing with one’s identity logic” is not for everyone. In this sense, the rebellion is not negative. The art scene has been a field of experimentation where all research and all claims have been expressed : destruction, construction, deconstruction, archaism, sex, war, subversion, melancholy, everything is there, unfortunately we also know that all have failed. “We are in a completely paradoxical state, which is reflected, I believe, by a fear, a sort of collective panic in front of this situation where everything has already happened, where utopias are realized, where in reality we are in disillusion. total. “ (Baudrillard)

Since the 1990s, we have witnessed an explosion, a polyphony of speeches which collide mainly on the internet. We no longer assert ourselves by defending ideas outside ourselves but from what we are and even from what we believe to be. The revolutionary “We” fades away, historical amnesia sets in, the collective project of society bursts into a multitude of personal projects.

The body is then reinvented and becomes an instrument of social practices, an organic body, a subjective body, finally, a material body, exploited by several artists and authors who make it an object of representation. The body is no longer divided into two poles : good and evil, spirit and body, soul and flesh as in previous centuries, but rather in an infinity of fictions, representations and symbolic systems . The body is found in the multiplicity of identities, in the disguise of being . (Kathleen Thibault)

Mock body

The *Poku* phenomenon (Pop + Otaku: popular culture and fan of Japanese animation) has invaded the planet. *Poku*, imbued with the manga imagination, claims the heritage of American pop art. Aya Takano claims to be part of this new artistic current inspired by the Japanese subculture. His favorite field is adolescence in a consumerist and unbridled society. In an increasingly computerized society, the adolescent misses real life. Adolescence is a difficult passage to cross. How to stay real and not disappear in virtual worlds, to be caught in the web?



Google / image / Aya Takano

Through her paintings, we can see dreamy or bored adolescent girls, passive in action but resolutely active in thought: their deep gazes - represented by very

dilated pupils - seem to scrutinize us to the depths of our soul. Are they happy or sad behind their masks? Are they naive or perverse?

Postmodernity is installed as a way of life, it is made for youth, by youth and lives centered on the image of youth. She adopted the desire for entertainment and promoted it to the rank of culture. Western society has remained an adolescent. Postmodernity is having fun, it likes the illusions and lures that are offered to it. She has neither a sense of depth nor a sense of the Sacred. What she devotes above all a cult to is the image, what she venerates is the production of illusions, the spectacular and the immediate.

The otaku world is a virtual game; it is then a question of participating in it. One can be at the same time or successively half-man, half-animal, sorcerer, monster, knight or fairy, etc. The player forms a double and joins a larger tribe of fans of cartoons, video games, special effects and fanzines. Each player takes on a multiple personality behind which he advances masked. Rimbaud's "I is another", a poetic expression, becomes virtually achievable, a parallel life is born. The principle of reality so dear to Freud turns into a phantasmagoria. (Azuma Hiroki, *Generation Otaku*, 2008)

"The societal project of postmodernity is to have none."

Postmodernity as a radical expression of individualism refuses any form of commitment; "Getting involved is a trick of old idiots." Postmodernism is the end of the supremacy of culture and the advent of the consumer as culture, measurement of culture from consumption. We, the young, our culture is consumption; we want everything and immediately. (Arianne Moffat) We don't want to change the world, we want to profit from it. We consume ideas, opinions, movies, comics, shows, music in a rush like merchandise or TV shows; our judgments vary according to our zapper mood in search of the immediate satisfaction of desire at the lowest cost.

In this regard, the *Second life* site on the Internet adequately shows the psychological process of identity transfer to another virtual identity freed from constraints, that of happiness without alienation. (www.secondlife.com)

With *Second life*, it is about living not your own life, but that of another, who tells, agitates, strikes, strips off or makes love for you. *Second Life* is a hybrid between a community site and an online game. Each user can build a three-dimensional character in the smallest details, and buy a house, a swimming pool, a car, objects of all kinds ... In short, everything he needs so that his character can evolve according to our desires.



"The age we are entering is that of personal democratization, of self-invention. The individual is called upon to define himself and to choose, in all areas of his personal life; to choose its truth, its morality, its future, and ultimately its identity. He has become a creator of himself, intoxicated by these new spaces of freedom ..." (Kaufmann) and his creative genius commands him to leave traces in a unique work like a bar / code which proves its value. Since everything is now controlled, the citizen can only execute on the material which is clean and accessible to him, cleared of social constraints: his body / Eden in the world of commercialized body art.

Internet is the apology of kitsch, make-up, illusion like the narcissistic sexual parade on "sex-chat", it is the nickel presentation of oneself with retouched image on Photoshop, download as a bonus. The more we retouch the original, the more we participate in our erasure from the world; the image as "a pseudo-ideal which takes the place of a reality

already existing in the world. "Hyper individualistic art now requires complete adherence to technology by offering virtual universes of complete immersions that feed a collective narcissism leading to an entirely electronic religiosity. Our image on *Facebook* resembles the false gods of antiquity called "idols. It is no longer a question of taking the place of God but of erecting oneself in one's own God. The distorting mirror of virtual reality thus destabilizes us even in our own privacy.

It is the body-gadget, the body-botox, the body-playful, the body-disneyland "which become the models according to which people shape themselves, it follows an extreme alienation." (Ewen) The female "and android Steroided perpetually pixilated facelift are the ones that you may encounter in your sailing on the waters of cybersex where life is far from being" a nice quiet

river. Cybersex is the universe of the absence of all identity markers in a pornographic imagination where, in total ecstasy, Iraqi soldiers pose naked, piled up in heaps and forced to sexually activate in front of video cameras. War and porn; just more of the same.

The cult of postmodern representation, like a hypnotic trance, venerates the image and the illusions it provides. We no longer speak, we communicate more but we look at the same image. The more images there are, the more there is nothing to say. Postmodern art is a desert of humanist thought in favor of hyper individualism.

“To express oneself in a postmodern context means to show oneself in one’s difference for difference even if one has nothing to say, especially if one has nothing to say.” (Carfantan)

Art thus becomes eminently egocentric. We are forced to note that the public space is entirely invaded by the advertiser who extends his sprawling visibility into the private office.

My helping narcissism, these modern, postmodern or ultramodern scenarios that whatnot, becoming expression of the “me- myself-and-I” where the artist as traveler XXth century became a staging oneself in world: Me in front of the Sphinx, Me in front of the Eiffel Tower, Me in Place Saint-Pierre, Me in front of the Taj Mahal, Me in the Sahara, Me among the Innu of Minganie in Canada, etc. The I merging with all cultures.

Having reached this term, death has done its work since the viewer has lost his soul. Not from a physical death, but more essentially still, not to live one’s life, to die as a presence in the world, to die as a Presence to oneself, to disappear in the flux of the inconsistent and the unreal of another life that will never be mine.

Telling stories is not new to society, as archaic myths attest. Except that the evolution of the fictional narrative was inevitably confronted with reality. The expected identity script was therefore continually reshaped by life experience. But it happens that the gap between the desired identity and reality is so deep that it causes identity rupture. It follows a lag often a confrontation which destabilizes the individual. There is then a gradual withdrawal from ordinary action towards contemplation or reverie, further strengthening the virtual identity.

“Here is the new fence: the finished man, locked in his ego, his identity and his rights, who does not tolerate any foreign reference to his desires, his body and his origins. Apparently open to everyone, the finished man allowed himself to be enclosed in a cocoon which he himself had secreted. This confinement, which is caused by the degradation of the sense of the ideal, is the mark of today’s narcissistic individualism which divides contemporary man from a world populated by images. (...) As soon as the referents and ideals disappear, in short all his vertical sense of otherness, the best survival strategy available to finished man is to fall back on himself, should he have been the only measure of

his desires.” (Marc Chevrier, *The Time of the Finished Man*, p.91)

Androgynous body

Porn, as mass art, has had the merit of informing us about the ideological discourse that prepares the ousting of women from the only place where they immediately prevailed: motherhood. The feminist movement had not foreseen, moreover could it foresee it? - that the total liberation of the woman would end in the complete disappearance of the mother, - her sacrifice? - ousted by the techniques of reproduction in favor of the sterilizing sexuality of porn. From the prehistoric rituals that man aspires to dispossess woman of her creative power, the day has finally arrived for the ultimate conquest.

“The last word cannot be left to nature: this is the fundamental stake. This exceptional grace, innate, immoral like a cursed part, must be sacrificed and immolated by the enterprise of the seducer, who will lead it by a learned tactic to erotic abandonment, where it will cease to be power. of seduction, that is to say a dangerous power. (...) In any case, something is given to the woman, which must be exorcised by an artificial enterprise, at the end of which she is dispossessed of her power. (...) It is always the story of a murder, or rather of an aesthetic and sacrificial immolation ...” (Baudrillard, *De la seduction*, 1979, p. 136-140)

“The death of God is also the death of the goddess” (Haraway)



The modern icon of the woman dispossessed by the man of her motherhood is the drag queen, “that fairy gone wrong”, as the triumph of sterile hyper femininity. The drag queen symbolically prepares the ground for the ousting of woman as a “biological matrix”, natural, in favor of the triumphant advance of the cybernetic, artificial matrix.

But the transsexual is only a step towards an even more esoteric or magical finality : the androgyne. The radical American feminist, Donna Haraway, carried away by the cybernetic movement in

Simians, Cyborgs and Woman. The Reinvention of Nature calls with all its wishes for the complete denaturalization of women and, by extension, of men. “There is no longer any father or mother, but an all-powerful technical matrix.” (Lafontaine Céline, *L’empire cybernétique* 2004)

One would be inclined to believe that women would naturally be inclined to

defend humanist feminism against the cybernetic approach. But to believe, the historian Haraway, in *Cyborg Manifesto*, only cybernetics will be able to deliver the woman from the socio-historical oppression of which she is the victim by building a new environment where the differences between humans and machines, between men and women will be abolished. . The cybernetic feminist “dreams of a hybrid world, without sex and without gender. We see very well how this cybernetic feminism contributes to the immense popularity of the cosmetic and biotechnological industries which dream of reshaping the human body according to the fantasized codes formulated by genetic engineering thanks to computer-generated images. Concept at the heart of the work of several plastic artists because this inaccessible androgyny is what humanity is heading towards. (Haraway in *Virtual Speed*, p.254-258)

It is necessary to remember that behind this philosophical dialectic, there is a real political demand. Thus the imperfection of Man would be sexual duality. For Klonaris and Thomadaki, for example, the desire to offer an alternative to the difference between the sexes is accompanied by a feminist position: “in order to be able to oppress women, we must know that they are indeed women. By creating confusion, we would therefore resolve all inequalities. The emblem of the androgyne ultimately participates in the same discourse as gender but shifts it towards sexuation, towards the anatomical sexes. It is no longer a question of contesting the constructions of the feminine and the masculine but rather the bipartition of man-woman, or more exactly male-female and to wish for its disappearance, such would be the purpose of feminism, it was necessary to think about it.

Google-image / Klonaris and Thomadaki cycle of the angel

These works would thus join the discourse on the love of Aristophanes in *The Banquet* of Plato in which the love would correspond to the feeling of nostalgia in front of this lost unity. Androgyny therefore also corresponds to this fantasy of completeness. It beckons towards the original fusion and embodies this memory of origin and sexual indifferentiation, even as Mircea Eliade says, “the essential nostalgia for humanity. “In the *Timaeus*, Plato says that at the beginning of mankind there was no sexual division. Taken up by biblical religions, this theme of unity is embodied in the asexual angel and cherub. Once again, ancient myths come to captivate contemporary artists. Transsexuals and androgynes thus cross the contemporary imagination like the sketches of a body in the making, whose current configurations oscillate between technological fetishism, sexual nihilism and the invention of an idyllic beyond. We are still at the heart of a fantasy scenario that works on the mode of belief. (<http://www.delrue.fr/memoire/posthumain3.pdf>.)

Techno-mystical body.

Postmodernity marks the arrival of neochamanism within everyone's reach. Individualization requires, man is certain that he is his only shaman, as he is his only artist, his only guru capable of achieving his spiritual connection with the cosmos. This refocusing of spirituality on the individual marks the explosion of “à la carte” sects. “No more collective religions, mass cults, welcome to the

world of alternative beliefs of neochamanism, which makes certain ethnologists say that primitive shamanism was probably the first religion of man and I add that techno shamanism will be the last.

Placed under the seal of reconciliation, of synchronicity, where physical and metaphysical, intuition and reason, psychology and parapsychology, everything becomes recycled, stirred, diverted and amalgamated in a formidable re-enchantment of the world. Never will the spiritual offer have reached this hallucinating proliferation of karma-cola, an expression designating the commercialization of postmodern spirituality.

Monotheistic religions, oriental spiritualities, alternative medicine, naturopathy, psychotherapies coexist until almost incestuous copulation to give birth to hybrid entities as improbable as Christic massage, Koranic astrology, Kabbalistic tarology, Sufis cleaners of chakras, Gestalt shamans, Gnostic oncologists, physiotherapists and hypnotherapist dentists. But this convergence between technology and natural sources of life distills in our veins a most perverse effect.

The more science and technology evolve, the more they employ a mystical language. The equations of quantum mechanics become such enigmas that only a metaphysical language can grasp their complexity. Thus Einstein pleaded in favor of a “cosmic religiosity” to which corresponds “no idea of ??a God analogous to man”; a cosmic religiosity without dogma, without Church, without

caste of priests. Certainly, because this religiosity is inescapable; the more science apprehends the limits of the Universe, the more its representation escapes the rational and takes refuge in metaphor and poetry, which the famous physicist Werner Heisenberg illustrated in these terms: “We certainly end up succeeding in understand the world, by presenting its order structures in mathematical forms; but when we want to talk about it, we have to be content with metaphors and parables, almost as in religious language. “

But above all, quantum theorems show us that the world has become random and reality as absolute truth indecipherable. Science which, since the Enlightenment, has rationally dismantled the spiritual conception of the world, finds itself in a dead end ; a completely logical incomprehension - “Our reason has



limits” (Kant) - which allows the return of the sacred. Some claim that science is rationally discovering what mystics have intuitively known all along.

Techno-mysticism tends to replace the sacred in the technosphere and even, as a supreme goal, hopes to transform us into electronic angels. All the great myths of humanity are resurrected in an electronic form, mainly that of the pure spirit being. Bright idea is found in the writings of Joachim of Flora grouped in *the Apocalypse exhibition* which dates back to the XIIIth century. According to him, the millennium is the “third age” which will be that of the Spirit who will succeed the age of the Father (*Old Testament*), the age of the Son (*New Testament*). We are just beginning to understand the exceptional role of Joachim de Flore’s “prophecies” in the birth, structure, in short, the genesis of all modern millenarian and / or revolutionary movements including techno-mysticism while awaiting their return. from the “golden age” prior to the Mesopotamian city-states and their theologies of enslavement.

The techno-mystic mixes the transcendent impulses of the hippies of the 60s with the electronic aspirations of the cyberpunks of the 80s-2000s. For hippies, the bright future is psychedelic focused on the expansion of consciousness thanks to hallucinogenic drugs allowing the body to regain its primitive purity, for cyberpunk, the future is cyberdelic focused on consciousness connected to large computer networks forming cyberspace, “the body being obsolete. The point of convergence being that both bear witness to a religious faith in technology, one chemical (LSD) and the other electronic (computer).

Two major books turn out to be the founders of the new electronic theology in accordance with the prophecies of Joachim de Flore. The first *The Future of Man* by Teilhard de Chardin announces the great spiritual metamorphosis that humanity awaits: the noosphere. The more the matter, the atom, becomes more complex, the more it becomes conscious, he explains. Man, as the most sophisticated conscious organism, has allowed evolution to access the technosphere, the fruit of reason. This new leap follows the successive spheres which have covered the earth: the lithosphere, the biosphere, the atmosphere. By adding the technosphere, man brings evolution to the threshold of a new leap where the men of the future will no longer form, in any way, a single consciousness, the noosphere announced in 1924. For him, the advent of an “Ultra-humanity” will converge in an “Omega Point”, a sort of cosmic Christ who would be the completion of evolution in the noosphere, a sort of Hyper-spirit. McLuhan’s second *Understanding Media* explains that communications technologies are gradually transforming the world into a “global village” for achieving “one and only consciousness”. Two important volumes of the counter-culture which therefore attempt the reconciliation between metaphysics and materialism in a scientific cosmology.

The “cyberdelic”, the “noosphere” thus illustrate the arrival of a technetronic nirvana where the spirit will definitively supplant matter, the body. “What in reality is the elimination of man himself from the process which man has discovered and perfected, with his promised end of all struggles and all research, if not the final escape of Buddha from the Wheel of life ? Once complete and universal, complete automation (post-humanism) means total renunciation of life,

and ultimately total extinction: the very retreat into Nirvana that Prince Gautama described as the only way to free himself. sorrow, pain and misfortune. » (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine*, T.II, 1974, p.307)

This Mumford sighting is visualized at the end of *2001 A Space Odyssey*, a film co-written by Clarke and Kubrick, where the techno-mystical apotheosis comes true when the astronaut crosses the “Omega” point where the outer odyssey and interior converge to form the sacred realm of a nirvana resolutely transcending humanity.

“According to new technologies, living beings belong less and less to the organic sphere. We become body-media, body-images, body-intelligence. We are transformed into a body-culture. “ (www.archée.qc.ca - interview with Olivier Dyens - Chair et métal)

“Gone are the days when humans defined themselves simply according to their biology, today machines are an integral part of this definition.” “Who says life has to be organic? ” (Www.archée.qc.ca, op. Cit.)

“The more the cultural and media environment grows, expands and acquires its autonomy, the less the organic environment is necessary. ” (Www.archée.qc.ca, op. Cit.)

“We have to go paperless. We have to “decorporate”. We must become “liquid” and immerse ourselves completely in the information space that cyberspace offers us. To survive, to allow this planet to survive, we will have to make ourselves more transparent, less “heavy”, less flesh and more information, more bytes and less genes. ” (Www.archée.qc.ca, op. Cit.)

However, this dematerialist and post-humanist science recalls in several points the mystical theology developed by monastic orders where man is in a way the author of his own salvation in his search for deification, his *theosis*, an idea founded on of Christ’s own words:

“I give them the glory that you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me, so that they are perfectly one. ” (John 17: 22-23).

Leaving his body, the mystic unites with God in the contemplation of the world and thus participates in his *theosis*, that is to say in his deification:

“You have granted me, Lord, that this corruptible temple - my human flesh - unites with Your holy flesh, that my blood mingles with Yours; and henceforth I am Your transparent and translucent member. » (Simeon the New Theologian).

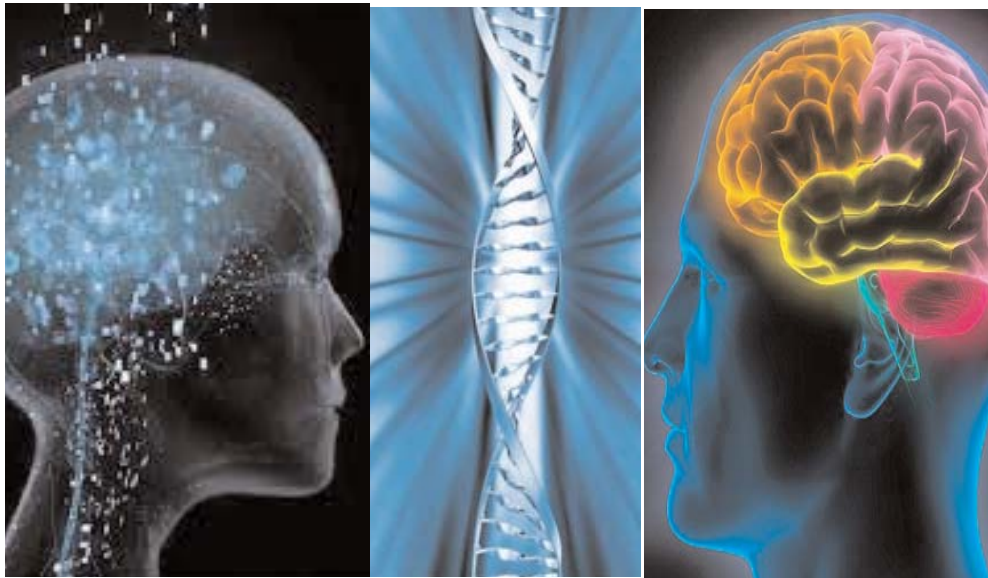
The mystical theology of the Incarnation developed by the monks is part of a search for union with divine energy “which transforms the body and makes it spiritual (...) so that the whole man becomes Spirit. ” (Triads AI, 2.9). This means that “he who participates in divine energy (...) himself becomes, in a way, light; he is united with the Light, and with the Light he sees in full con-

sciousness all that remains hidden from those who have not had this grace ” (V. Lossky, *Theology of Light*, p. 110 in Eliade)

The entry of the divine Light into the conscience thus makes it possible to discover the perfection of the origins and the end, the ultimate fate of man who will put an end to history. (Eliade) And only worthy men (artists, cybernetic scientists) like monks can now enjoy the vision of the Light. Except that the monk in a trance leaves his body momentarily to return to it while the technomystic invites us to a permanent “farewell to the body”.

So here is the era of techno-shamans whose messianic program was prophesied by Arthur C. Clarke, famous science fiction author who already in 1968 declared in the *Playboy* magazine :

“Maybe our role on this planet is not to worship God, but to create him. “



In all spheres of human activity, we are witnessing a gradual establishment of an unnatural philosophy that wants to “free” us from human finitude and the terrible bankruptcy of man in his material environment. The modern artist discovers with terror not that he is mortal but that he is already dying, dying. And this anguish imposes on him the urgency to invent himself, to become a creator not of his identity but of his simulacrum except that inventing himself is not an easy task.

Transhuman body

Google-image / transhuman

Transhumanism preaches the “improvement” of Man by all possible technological means. This futuristic philosophy is based on the rejection of the “limits”

and “flaws” of human nature. It advocates nothing less than the emergence of a new species “superior” to our own; Nietzsche’s superman in techno sauce. Thanks to technology, we would be becoming “transhuman”, a transitional state towards “post-humanism. “

With prosthetic surgery, man should stop undergoing his physical evolution, he will be able to redefine it. Implants and prostheses show another way of sculpting our body, of giving it relief, of shaping it as we see fit, in the image we want to give.

The “transhumanists” distinguish four major possible evolutions. First evolution: the passage towards the era of the “robot sapiens” (the cyborg) with its intelligent prostheses or not. Second evolution: the shift towards “soma sapiens” or “pharmaceutical man”, a large consumer of drugs and cognitive enhancement substances ... in order to act on the biochemical composition of the brain and create feelings and beliefs at will. Third evolution: the switch to nanotechnological GMHs (genetically modified humans). The solution would go through biogenics and nanotechnologies which would allow a great permanent tinkering of stem cells. Fourth evolution: the passage towards “immortality” by “uploading” ie downloading of information found in our brain into a computer hard drive. All this beautiful program is perfectly summed up in the formula of the philosopher Daniel Tanguay: “to solve the human problem, not in its social or external conditions but starting from the transformation of the man himself”

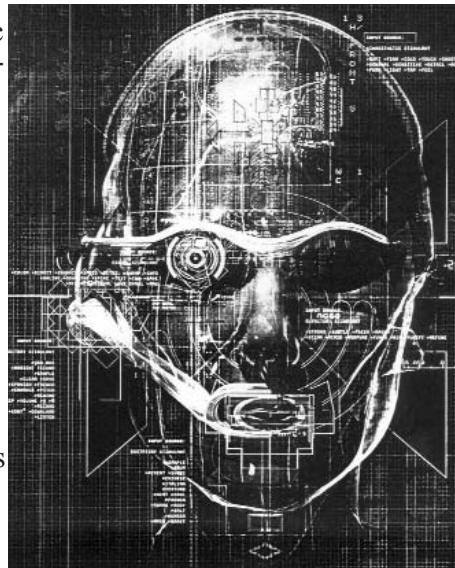
Welcome to the world of cybernetic body art of technological millennialism.

You can find everything on the Internet: sadomasochistic cyberpunk, messianic science fiction, virtual robot / advertising pixel fights, self-amputation shows, neo-inquisitive checks of your most secret thoughts, neuro prophecies. -psychiatric, “cyborgasm”, shamanic submolecular visions, brain musicians, erotomaniac machines / dolls, virtual dredges, sex tex, paradoxical sexuality, technicized perversions, morphed creatures, transgenic animals, biotechnological disembodiments, surgical alienation, barbies macho men, cyborg bodybuilders, “neuro-mancers”, biomechanical tattoos, neurological prostheses, neuromuscular chips: osmosis of a new man and a modern primitive.

In their hands, cybernetic art thus becomes a ritual celebrating the apotheosis of cyberculture where the spirit will soon undergo, such is the promise of salvation, a digital processing like computer-generated images. Today, it is cyberspace, a contemporary illusion, which offers the most sought-after field of identity experimentation, experience of the double media where all the symptoms of modern discomfort, continual dissatisfaction with real identity, the tension of unfulfilled desires find their outlet on the Internet in techno-kitsch. Even more, hyper individualistic art now requires a complete adhesion to technology by offering virtual universes of complete immersions which nourish a collective narcissism leading to an entirely electronic religiosity.

“The natural relationship between man and reality is therefore modified or even destroyed and is replaced by an artificial relationship created from scratch by means of technology. We see the world through television, video images, we

think of the world through our technical power to transform Nature. We represent interiority through the use of technical instruments. We imagine through futuristic representations that technology is discovering us. The thought, the word, the action, the imagination, the sensitivity, the sensitivity of our time live under the influence and under the influence of technique. Does this mean that technique has become a way of thinking? Or is it there to dispense us from thinking? “ (Serge Carfantan, <http://sergecar.club.fr>, Philosophy and spirituality, lesson 44)



This techno-shamanist art is part of the great movement of liberation from nature propagated for all major religions and finds its culmination in the Advent of digital Immortality where identity, character and memories will be saved on hard disk.

“All evil is justified, the spectacle of which builds up a God. “ (Nietzsche)

The whole cyberculture is characterized by a search for transcendence in the image of the majority of the great religions. Denial of the body is the path of suffering to attain Enlightenment following the example of monastic self-flagellations and stigmatized saints. But often when the body appears as the limit to transcendence, then going out of the body becomes the ultimate means of spiritual elevation. The artists / performers of body art have enabled us, through their “theater of cruelty”, by their staging of the body, to understand the odious absurdity of the body doomed to corruption: the weakness of the finished, damaged man. , aged, destined to die.

“The perfection of means and the confusion of goals seem to characterize our time. “(Einstein)

Today’s science resembles in several respects those “laboratory arts” which were the arts of the construction of the new man. Like them, science, mainly technoscience, aspires to metamorphosis as a desire for an indeterminate future, as an inner necessity towards a utopian imagination. Since religions, politics and art have demonstrated their powerlessness in the face of the challenge of the real world, it is now up to science to take over.

At the turn of the last century, science fiction writers were drawing inspiration from scientific advances to create beings with fabulous powers. Since then, science has been inspired by these super heroes to create research projects that attempt to make tangible these powers imagined in order to develop humans, make them more efficient, more powerful.

It is the same with the cyborg as with current artistic projects. It is paradoxical to note that both artists and scientists, even the most atheists keen on the theory

of evolution, do not escape transcendence; that in wanting to create the cyborg, they “confirm” that man is a creation: “the artificial creature and the human of which it is the image are part of a creation which always calls on a “ higher level. » (Breton, In the image of man : from the golem to virtual creations, 1995)

Like God creating man by breathing the breath of life into matter, human beings have always aspired to demiurgy. In the past men deify what they did not understand, whereas today they deify what they understand, what is within their reach. In the first place, to realize the incredible potential of the new cybernetic man, the only one capable of breaking down the borders between man, animal and machine; a fusional being integrating all the utopian concepts of the ideal body that has finally become real, the ideal realized.

The application of the cybernetic concept goes to Steve Mann, researcher at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and the inventor of “wearable computers”, a kind of small computer to be carried on one’s person. He would be one of the first cyborgs, a primitive cyborg. Here is how he reports his cybernetic experience in the American magazine *Technology Review* :

“Each morning, I decide in what form I will visualize the world during the day. Sometimes, I add two eyes behind my head - it can be useful, you never know ... - Or, I grant myself a sixth sense, like the ability to feel objects at a distance thanks to the “vibravest” that I invented. It is a jacket equipped with radars that detect approaching objects and then trigger vibrators. (...) Merging with technology brings me to a higher state of consciousness. “

You will notice that our primitive cyborg carries all of his sensory devices outside the human body. The next step was that of the American Johnny Ray who implanted an electrode in the brain which, when it concentrates, controls a computer. From now on, with nanotechnologies (miniaturization technologies) man will be able to swallow his own technology and will be able to structure his body to his liking; he will be an architect of himself.

The great pundits of nanotechnology are already seeing the light of day when these microscopic machines will repair cells indefinitely and will make us almost immortal. The notion of the body becomes fundamental in the light of nanotechnologies since it becomes as such an increasingly dominant place of power. This is what could also call into question human nature as well as the humanist notion that seemed to characterize it: freedom. Because these tiny grains of sand stuffed with information that can be slipped between the skin and the muscle of the limbs will also act as real bar codes and will also allow the identification and satellite localization of individuals. Thus technologies will always be at the service of the social control of the masses for the purposes of order and security.

It is Michel Foucault who has best analyzed this increasingly strong intrusion of power into bodies. In *The Will to Know* , biopower has a role of regulator of the social body: it regulates the population, administers the living ... “It is about investing life through and through. “And to add :” A normalizing society is the

historical effect of a technology of power centered on life. “

Aside: Watch your trash, never turn your back on your TV, smile at your car more often. Say “hello” in the morning to your coffee maker and “goodbye” to your alarm clock. When your shoelace comes loose, coins fall from your pants, the pen stops writing, the motor coughs, the toothpaste plug falls in the sink, the toaster burns your toast, may the traffic light always turn red for you; above all, don’t get upset, everything is terribly trapped, because that’s what they want these dirty objects, to eliminate you, to make you crack. This is their subversive action: to take your place by making yourself like them. (script from a 1950s science fiction text)

Biomechanical body

If Warhol wanted to become a machine, the characters in HR Giger have already achieved the great biomechanical fusion. He is the great eroto-bio-mechanical master of video games and of all cyberpunk culture, the most influential artist in the pictorial world of new technologies. Giger’s biomechanical creatures are no longer human, with him, “God is a monster. “Creator of Alien, monster of Hollywood cinema, fin-de-siècle style, the Swiss surrealist painter Giger, in his works / paper including *Necromonicon*, *Biomechanics*, reveals to us a whole insane universe” of buttocks sodomized by autonomous penises and cemented by excrements, a quadriplegic child covered with boils, “erotomechanical” images of human orifices penetrated by heavy-metal phalluses”, in short, he presents to us his biomechanical cosmogony of “flesh and metal” monsters expressing his post-humanist phobias who still confuse, even still, the most seasoned Freudian psychiatrists.

“Bio-mechanical” bodies, a term used by Giger, are the epitome of technological tribalism and say a lot about the human condition in cyberculture. For Ray Bradbury, famous science fiction writer, “these illustrations predict the future”.

The artificialization of the environment thus affects the entire body : plasticized organs, implants, prostheses, genetic manipulation, robotics. When Stelarc

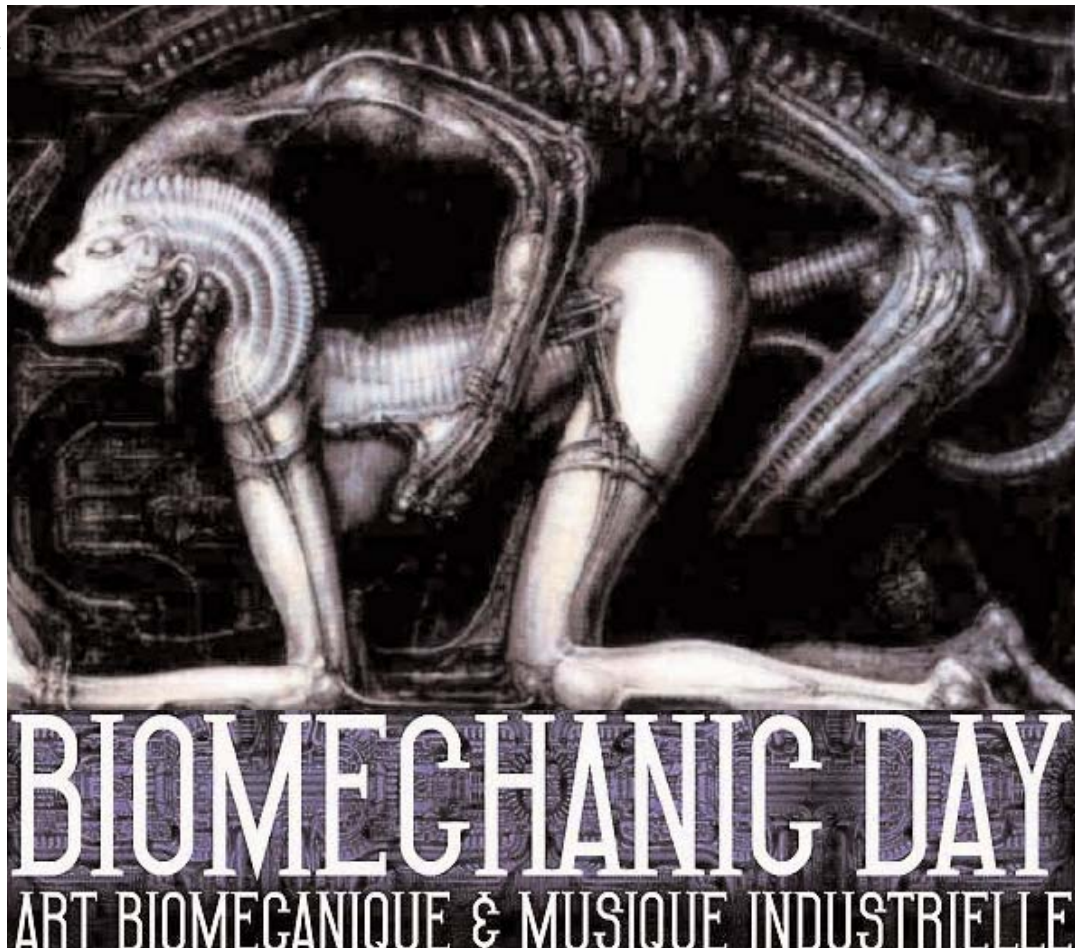
claims that the body is obsolete, he points out that McLuhan’s claim that technology is the extension of body functions is outdated. From now on, technology becomes an essential component of the body so that the body can finally function in real time, at the speed of light as in computer networks, hence Stelarc’s idea of an “amplified, accelerated body” by electronic implants.

The body is for Stelarc a site of radical experimentation. Thus cybernetic art continues the research undertaken by medicine at the beginning of the last century, think of artificial lungs, the pace maker for the heart, electronic implants. This medical machinery transposes the notion of the laboratory body to society as a whole, art being no exception on the contrary. Stelarc began with spectacular suspensions, coldly using his body not to reach a higher state of consciousness but as a simple material for sculpture. Empty, vulnerable, obsolete body that it penetrates, virtualizes, robotizes. He explores telepresence and the involuntary body in *Split Body* by allowing distant people to pilot half of his body connected to an interface that sent him electric current and involuntarily contracted his muscles. In *Poing Body*, he connects his body to the Internet which he uses as an external nervous system, the body moving according to data from the net, possessed by a computer entity. “ I do not see the body as the site of the psyche or of the social inscription which presupposes a kind of me, but as a biological apparatus that can be redesigned. “

So many new materials which the artist seizes upon: Stelarc’s third arm in the form of an electromechanical prosthesis, synthetic human skin dolls made by Australian artists from the *Symbiotica* group, genetic manipulation experiments by Edouardo Kac on plants and animals, finally what about the mannequins of Christ Cunningham, presented at the Venice Biennale 2001, with the connecting rods and synthetic cogs so nicely polished and harmoniously making love (All is full of Love) in a post synthetic universe -humanist.

“Art is an action that makes you think. “ (Alain)

In his performances, Stelarc’s body becomes a veritable experimental laboratory



where the body, like a NASA cosmonaut, is surrounded by various sensors, microphones and probes projecting on a video screen the images and sounds of organs interacting with artificial prostheses. . In this regard, Stelarc uses the formulation of McLuhan for whom technology has always been at the center of human evolution from the appearance of tools in the Paleolithic to modern computers. Except that until today, technology did not interfere with the intrinsic nature of man. It is now otherwise. With miniaturization, micro-machines can be implanted in the body.

According to Stelarc, the introduction of prostheses into the body (artificial heart, etc.) signifies the end of the biological evolution of the species; with each transplant, the being now evolves artificially and gradually from generation to generation towards the cyborg. We are at the crossroads of evolution, we are entering a post-Darwinian era which opens the way to a symbiosis between the biological and the technological. The body must be rid of its organs to become a better receptacle for more efficient prostheses and above all resistant to biodegradation.

A whole fundamentally post-humanist philosophy is built on the postulate that the cybernetic body will be able to act and live beyond its own biology and the space / time allotted to it. Post-humanism no longer accepts the human body as it is. And to clearly mark the end of organic evolution, the disgust of the body, the flesh, in cyber language, is called “meat.” “

From counter-culture to against-nature.

“Sacrilegious instincts still haunt big dreams. “ (Noorbergen)

Artists and scientists therefore strive to empty the body of its substance: the gene replacing the soul, the preventive gnomics to detect “imperfect” subjects. The technosciences make of my body a piece of de-spiritualized flesh. It is my entire presence in the world which is here annihilated by this metaphysical reductionism.

Curiously, the mass cyberculture represented by the popular art of video games is a curious mixture of comics, “trash” art and the futuristic precepts of Marinetti on violence and war, of Stalinist productivism promoting the speed, of the machine. Except that the dream of the early XXth century embodied in the mass culture has turned into totalitarian tendencies in a market obsessed with democracy idolatry of goods. Art is an essential component of our societies and will always be present. It is therefore not art that is at issue here but rather a critique of the representation of man and of the socio-political direction that certain artists try to promote. What do you want, art is not exempt from totalitarian drifts as futurism and productivism, socialist realism, etc.

In Richard Hadrey’s *Metrophage*, “Zombie analytics”, a sort of savage gang, have their “crest”, their totemic emblem in the form of body tattoos such as “subcutaneous pixels that reproduce scintillating images of the skin of dead stars of the world. rock and video. While in *Video Star*, Walter Jon Williams describes the new trend in the style of “urban surgery”:

“The result was a flattened face turned into a canvas for the tattoo artist who had covered every square inch of flesh. Complex mathematical formulas covered the forehead. Under the black plastic eye implants one could see skyscrapers, silhouettes of buildings which traced a fictitious horizon across the flattened nose. The chin appeared to be a circuit board diagram. » (Quoted in Virtual Speed, p.292)

“We will have the destiny we deserve. “(Einstein)

Being is nothing more than a digital representation in a procession of multidisciplinary hybridizations drawn from the universe of media arts. Such is the posthumanist project, in line with the three monotheistic religions of the Book, that is to say an exponential hatred of the body, of the instincts and of nature. While poetry tends to bring being closer to its essence, technique tends to distance it; what art represents, technology achieves.



The question is no longer whether he will have a cyborg or not, but when? We are already acquiring the components of the cyborg, quietly, as we have seen. The art of the XXIth century sets the stage by spreading the gospel of the man-machine symbiosis bio-technicians. Even more, escaping the code of ethics under the pretext of creation, the artist becomes the guinea pig of daring bio-technical experiments supervised by complacent scientists.

Transgenic art is a compelling example of counter-natural artistic-scientific collusion.

Transgenic body

Google-image / transgenic

The discovery of the DNA double helix by Francis Crick, James Watson and Maurice

Wilkins in 1953 transported genetics to the pantheon of modern science and was instrumental in the evolution of the cybernetic concept for the creation of an artificial, intelligent being. and autonomous.

Bio-geneticists are drawn to the flesh, where “the word became flesh” precisely where the secret of life lies. Mystical DNA is therefore making a remarkable, if not remarkable, entry into the new scientist cosmogony. “Some geneticists refer to the human genome as ‘the Bible’, ‘the book of man’ and the ‘holy grail’. (...)

The history of the body in the XXth century is intimately connected to scientific developments and medical; it is therefore normal that the artist is interested in it. The genetics are proving to be just as thrilling if not more than interplanetary travel.

The contemporary artist is the only one to have brought up to date in modernity the anthro-



pocentric secret of our collective unconscious since prehistoric times: the creation of a new being from the genius of man. The instrumentalization of men by technosciences where man becomes the object of scientific work opens wide the doors of biological demiurgy. Genetic engineering, by a kind of molecular tinkering, goes beyond the natural and social order by fiddling with the human body itself as well as all living things. The body becomes a molecular theater open to all manipulations, possible staging.

Kac's artistic project aims to introduce the luminescent gene of the jellyfish *Aequorea Victoria* in his future dog as for the now famous fluorescent green rabbit. Subsequently, he will embark on the combination of DNA in order to create "plantimals" a kind of plant-animal or its opposite, an animal endowed with plant genetic material and to create "animals" a kind of human-animal or animal with human genetic material. The artist Christiane Geoffroy, for her part, intends to transpose the great paintings of contemporary painting into living art by genetically modifying cows. By manipulating the genes responsible for the shape of the framework and the color spots, she wants to offer farmers a catalog of cubist cows à la Picasso, cows / Mondrian, cows / Klee, a Vasareli, perhaps! Thus peasants and Sunday walkers will be in direct contact with the history of art.

Along the same lines, artist Marta de Menezes has succeeded in creating genetically modified butterflies with patterns never seen before in nature. In South Africa, Laura Cinti exhibited a transgenic cactus containing human genetic material that in addition to thorns produced human hair. Here is how she explains her project :

“ The“ cactus project ”began in 2001. Its first logistical challenge was the morphological expression of keratin genes implanted in cactus cells and the external production of hairs (even though internal production would have interested me just as much). Initially, our idea was to create and experiment with transgenic plants. The cactus, because it is almost carnal and often appears as both monolithic and innocent, protected by its thorns. Hair is a reproductive sign, the sign that our body is changing and becoming sexual. The meeting of the two is then intended as a semantic orgy, a upheaval of traditional genetic engineering which, instead of producing something sterile, is embodied in a transgenic cactus which remains sexual (an organic dildo, growing. .) ” ([Http://lesmutants.site.voila.fr/cinti.htm](http://lesmutants.site.voila.fr/cinti.htm))

These artistic works were of course quickly recovered by the economy. In 2003, for example, a Singapore company released the world's first transgenic pet, a fluorescent red, green and orange zebrafish. The “ Glofish “, (glow meaning to shine, fish, fish) is an animal genetically modified by the introduction into its genome of a fluorescent protein gene. (<http://www.glofish.com/>)

Transgenic exploitation of animals has only just begun. These artistic projects are in line with the current genetic manipulations of scientists on other pigs that have received human genetic material in order to produce and transplant in humans rescue organs or beta cells that produce insulin.

Of course, transgenic art is one of the advertising projects of the future.

Already, advertisers are working on projects to transform the colors and patterns of animals for commercial purposes. Genetic modifications in nature are blank advertising ground. Imagine the commercial spinoffs for the Nike or Adidas companies, for the one who succeeds in genetically introducing its logo on the coat of the cheetah, the fastest animal in the world.

“Imagine coral poisons displaying the EXXON company logo, Coca-Cola sharks, Pepsi barracudas, McDonald cows, Kentucky chicken, Land Rover rhinos, and so on. And to get the pill well, nothing like an advertising campaign explaining that these genetic modifications are part of a vast plan of the big international companies to avoid the extinction of endangered species. Large companies must sponsor all plant and animal species to protect them. » (Michael Crichton, *Next*, 2007, p.264-268)

“Science without conscience is only the ruin of the soul.” (Rabelais)

According to Marc-André Sirard, director of the *Center québécois de recherche en biologie de la reproduction* : “The most spectacular tool in genetic demiurgy is the famous 47th chromosome, an artificial micro chromosome which contains the genes that researchers are willing to place there. Inserted into the nucleus of a cell, this chromosome integrates with the rest of the human genome in the 46 natural chromosomes and allows the stable and precise expression of a high number of handpicked genes. The questions that immediately arise are: which genes must contain this chromosome? Where should we stop in improving the quality of life? What role models of human beings will we choose to be? Who will be the best human for the planet? Tomorrow will be our judge. One thing is certain there is no point in playing ostrich. These technologies will be used by humans. Slowly but surely because man has always sought to improve his lot and has always used the tools at his fingertips to achieve it. It's in its nature. But who will decide on their application to the species? Surely not you, surely not me! Let us not forget that modern science is subjugated by the economic law which determines its orientations. Research is increasingly driven by the market. Like politics, science is subservient to market forces and private investors. The collusion between new knowledge and the hegemony of the market will concretely achieve what is promising and technically feasible. Please know that hundreds of researchers are in the process of concocting the recipe for the posthuman and that we will be faced with a fait accompli without warning because we have let science think for us by accepting to be relieved of our responsibility for our destiny. How then to revolt against what appears to be an act of liberation?

Since the promulgation of patent rights on living beings (TRIPS), hundreds of biogenic companies have engaged in a veritable confiscation of living things, a kind of genetic neocolonialism where the DNA of inhabitants, plants and animals is systematically taken. . We are witnessing an incredible bio-piracy of biodiversity knowing that 80% of this still virgin biodiversity is found in countries, forests and in the genes of so-called developing populations.

Under the pretext of bio-prospecting, companies are grabbing the genetic wealth of poor countries with the same ferocity with which the West, in the past, had

plundered their natural wealth during the colonial period. For the period between 1987-1995, 25,000 biotechnology patents were filed with *the US Patent Office* while only about 100 were filed by developing countries, including China. (Papon, *Le temps des ruptures*, 2004, p. 210,)

Why such a gene gold rush? Because the number of living species is estimated between 5 and 50 million; no expert can say a figure with certainty which explains such a large difference. So far, only 1.4 million species have been identified: 990,000 invertebrates, 45,000 vertebrates and 360,000 plants and micro-organisms. But what is certain on the other hand is the worrying aspect of the loss of biodiversity. It is estimated between fifty and three hundred plant and animal species that go extinct every day while *the International Union for the Conservation of Nature* (IUCN) says in its red list that 11% of birds, 20% of reptiles, 25% of amphibians, 25% of mammals and 34% of fish are currently endangered globally. Instead of taking measures to rectify the ecological situation of the planet, we venture into collecting genes of endangered species from which we hope to obtain as many patents as possible. The scenario is all outlined in advance: in 20 or 30 years, companies will offer on the market the cloning of extinct animals and plants in order to “repair” the terrestrial ecosystem that we have degraded.

As always, man believes himself to be a creator when he is only confined to simple imitation. The clone will always be inferior to the original. The clone is a fascinating monster. On the other hand, the more the original disappears, the more “the monster” becomes important until eventually replacing it completely. Already, Pascal, in *Pensées*, had noticed the same phenomenon before in painting:

“What vanity is the painting which attracts admiration by the resemblance of things whose originals we do not admire! “

So much so that according to *the World Intellectual Property Organization* (WIPO), individuals and firms in industrialized countries held, in the mid-1990s and all fields combined, 95% of Africa’s patents, practically 85% of those

of Latin America and 70% of those in Asia. And the saddest thing is to note that this enormous disparity is most often the fact of the corrupt Third World political elite as Albert Memmi remarks: “It is not very difficult to see that there is a correlation between misery economic and unbridled corruption that plagues their countries. The failure of decolonization cannot be attributed to the West alone because there is indeed co-responsibility and Third World thought, which throws all the responsibility for its bitter failures on the dominant nations, is a fallacious thought. The former colonies may have succeeded in their political liberation but have failed in their economic and cultural liberation. (La Presse, September 24, 2004, Lectures, p.9)



And the only international text on biodiversity, the *International Convention on Biological Biodiversity*, signed in June 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit, clearly refuses (article 15, paragraph 1) to apply the status of heritage to genetic resources common to mankind.

However, this unprecedented capacity to shape nature “in our image” and to create bio-industrial flora and fauna will promote the emergence of a powerful scientific, technological and economic complex resulting from the convergence between the gene revolution and the electronic revolution. .

As we can see the artist is intimately linked to science to succeed in his artistic project. And what does science say? She answers yes, it is possible. The technique is not content like art, to stage our apocalyptic fears and the tragic disappearance of the human being, it has the possibility of realizing them.

Aside: Commentary on the Prophet Zarathustra. “But the prophet is weary of the eternal ritual of the regeneration of myths and announces once and for all a radical and definitive transfiguration of the human condition by the “science” of rigorous and useful knowledge. Man will only be able to attain Enlightenment through his sacrifice, in the transfiguration (final Revolution) where he surpasses his human condition to achieve the great “Universal Renovation.” “ (Eliade)

Behind this desire to create something “alive” for both the artist and the scien-

tist looms the phantasmagorical projection of creating another world, of being the rival of someone (God?) Or of something. (nature ?)

“Visceral sharing is the only way to break the isolation, to overcome the obligatory solitude which is the lot of any incarnation. Until we exchange our organs, we will not be able to have a real experience of the other. This is the only way to initiate a real exchange between individuals. Putting your guts on the table is insufficient. We must put them in the others and welcome theirs. Only at this price will we be able to abolish the exclusions, struggles and violence that have always divided peoples. Human nature is to be changed. Until now, art has been busy commenting and criticizing the world. He must now transform it. It is urgently necessary for humanity to take charge. Artists, to be up to their historic task as prophets, must show the way. » (Jean-Jacques Pelletier, *The missing flesh*, 1998)

This new conception of the role of art in society is essential for the understanding of modern art. By offering us his own reading of socio-political realities, the artist also claims to build “new realities” for a “new man” living in a “new city” and goes so far as to assert that his work “is an act of creation. , in the almost divine sense of the word. » (Read, *The philosophy of modern art*, 1988, p.16-21)

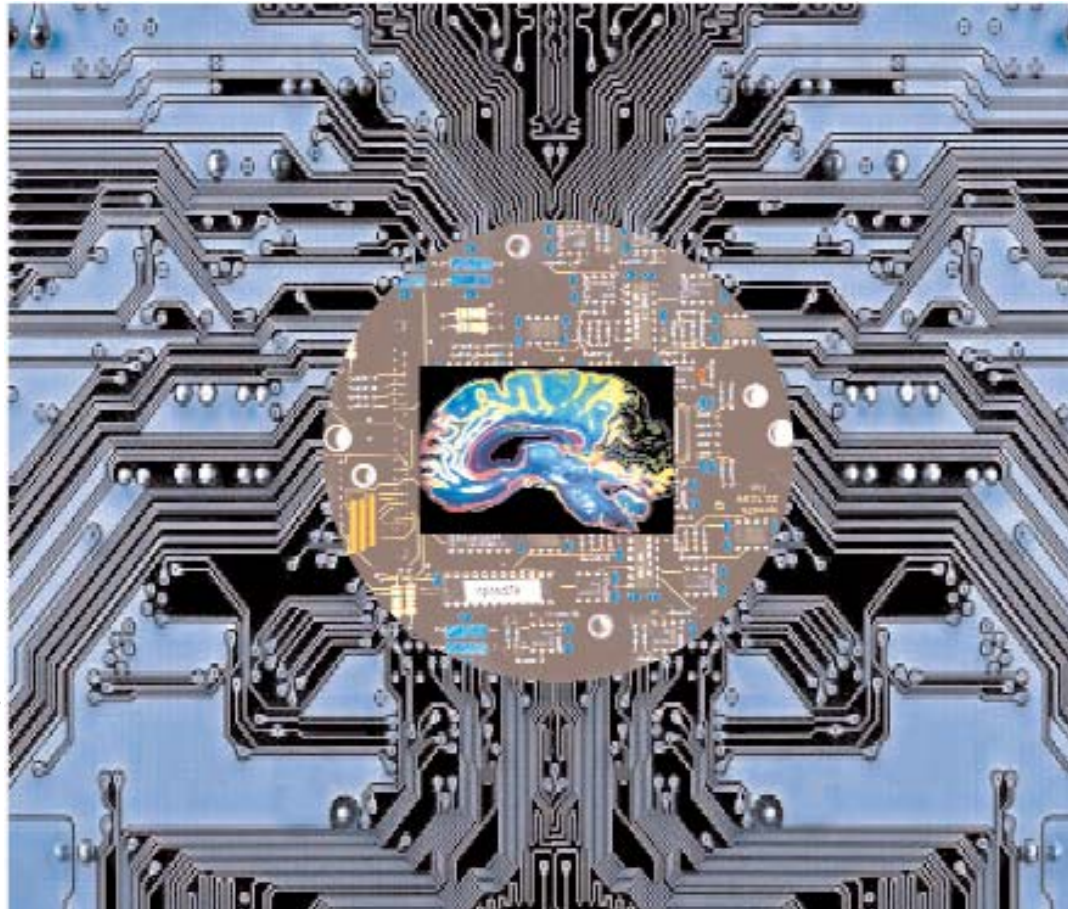
“It is not only science and technology that modernity was inspired. It was also, it was above all perhaps, a whole spiritualist syncretism which fed on what is most contrary to reason. Theosophy and anthroposophy, no doubt, but also spiritualism, occultism, dialogue with the deceased, belief in invisible worlds, in mysterious radiations, in paranormal forces, in parallel universes. (...) None of the great names of modernity, from Kupka to Kandinsky, from Mondrian to Malevich, from Duchamp to André Breton, emerged unscathed from this fascination which shows that symbolism did not die in 1900. A whole worrying esoteric nebula, where we find the belief in paranormal powers, the taste for palingenesis (reincarnation) and eschatologies (ultimate vision of man and the universe), but also the belief in the manipulation of the masses by the occult power of a few initiates, magi, masters and “leaders” (Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin), obscures the brilliance of the Enlightenment that modernity was supposed to increase. »

(Jean Clair, *The responsibility of the artist*, p.17-18) (The words in brackets are ours).

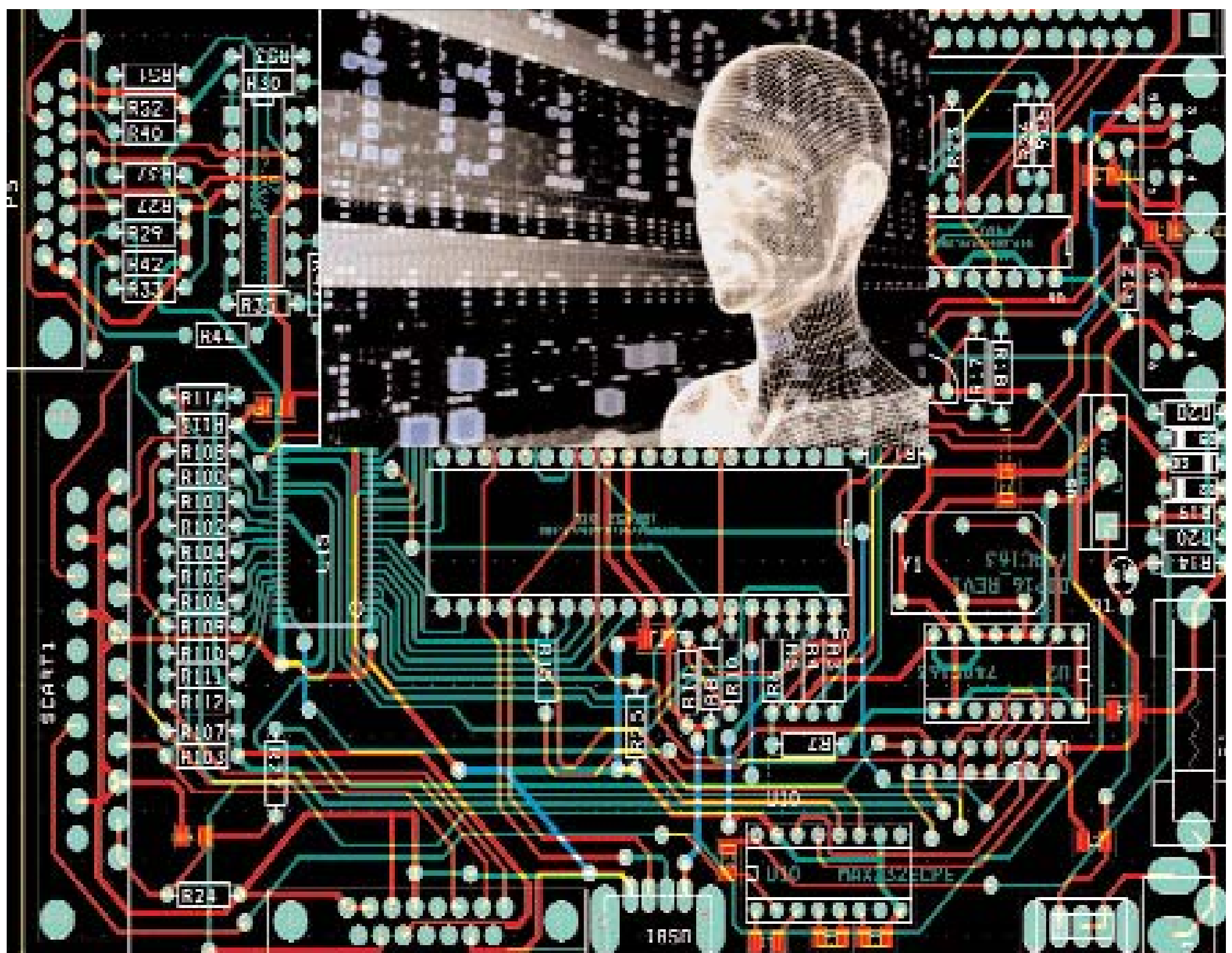
We are still swimming in the romantic illusion of “the artist rebellious to any cause, insolent, independent.” “From the dawn of the XXth century, artists, writers and theorists of modernity have shown otherwise. As much in Paris and Rome, Berlin and Moscow, the avant-garde intelligentsia flirted with terror. Since that time, the artistic avant-garde gangrened by the doctrine of salvation,

embodied by the artist / savior, has always tended to drift towards totalitarian utopias; fin-de-siècle post-humanism replacing Bolshevism, fascism and Nazism as a mass social utopia.

“I have seen the great mass ideologies grow and spread before my eyes, fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, Bolshevism in Russia and above all this plague of plagues, the nationalism which has poisoned the flower of our European culture. . I had to be the helpless and helpless witness of this unimaginable relapse of humanity into a state of barbarism that we had long believed forgotten, with its anti-humanism dogma consciously set up as a program of action. “ (Zweig) “ Their predilection for crime, for the satanic outsider, for the destruction of civilization is notorious. (...) The notion of avant-garde therefore took on an unfortunate meaning that its first supporters would never have imagined ” (Eizensberger cited by Clair, 1997, p.18-19)



The failure of avant-garde artists in their attempt to “change life” opened the door to a new unprecedented collaboration between art and science, a new positivist messianism will be born, that of creating, in the image of man, an artificial being; the body becomes an object of art and science, it is the road to Damascus which leads to the resurrection. Man henceforth aspires to the demiurgy, that of man / God. With the discovery of the human genome, a whole magico-religious language has invaded science. Stephen Hawking says scientists are unveiling “the spirit of God; Leon Lederman calls the subatomic particle “the God-particle” at the origin of everything. Sociologist Isabelle Stengers summed up the phenomenon very well, stating:



“When scientists talk about God, they are usually talking about themselves. “

Perhaps we need to be aware of the “deity complex” inherent in instrumental reason from modernity to make us understand and embrace modest reason? “If the Incarnation is the central fact of our culture, then everything follows. “

“No one will emerge alive from the arts of the future. The beauty of man is in his destruction. “

The big difference between genetics and bio-techno-informatics to reach the “final revolution” is that the reproduction of a human being from a skin cell (cloning) is not equivalent in terms of creation, to that of a downright artificial entity, external and independent of man. Even the creation of a transgenic being is for them only a backward-looking fiddling with genes associated with the 150 breeds of dogs resulting from human manipulation. It’s already seen. No, for many geneticists and computer scientists, the creation of the cyborg is much superior to the vulgar clone or the human-pig. Highly elite, cyberscience has for constant purpose the search for a higher state of man.

Since Antiquity, the mythical project of an artificial creature has therefore embodied the cutting edge of the most advanced techniques of their time in order to thwart or reproduce the laws of nature.

“Could we not then imagine that humanity is also a disease for some higher organism (the earth, the universe) that we do not manage to grasp as a whole, and in which it finds the condition, the necessity? and the meaning of its existence? Seeking to destroy this organism and being obliged to destroy it as it develops, just as the microbial species aspires to destroy the human individual suffering from a disease (cancer).

And are we not allowed to continue our reflection and ask ourselves if this is not perhaps the mission of any living community, whether it is the microbial species or humanity, of gradually destroy the world beyond it? (...) In this sense, it is perhaps permissible to interpret the history of humanity as an eternal struggle against the divine which, in spite of its resistance, is little by little, and by necessity destroyed by human. » (Jean Baudrillard, *Figures de l’Alternité*, p. 148-149, 1994)

Cybernetic body

“Science sends us back our own image: it is by looking in this mirror that we frighten ourselves. “ (Jacques Roger)

Science and technology have not said their last word. Let us be “resolutely postmodern” and go to the limit of our possibilities. Because the cyborg is only a step towards the ultimate goal. Because the cyborg is always material, it has a fused body, that is to say, but always subject to terrestrial attraction and therefore to nature, ditto for the transgenic body. However, the will to power wants to free itself from everything, to get out of the whirlwind of material gravity and

this supreme conquest will be that of the complete evanescence of the body in the spirit.

From now on, only the need to cross the natural limits of biological life will animate the desire of the artist in order to ward off the bad fate cast on the human condition, that of its slow and ugly decrepitude, its mortuary physiological decay. Let us therefore entrust to the fusion of art and science another soteriological mandate: post-humanism.

“In a spirit which in many ways recalls religious millenarianism, the prophets, many in the Anglo-Saxon world, of post-humanity claim that the coming technical revolution will represent a formidable evolutionary leap for the whole of terrestrial life, so that they eventually predict that these upcoming transformations will give birth to new forms of life far superior to ours. » (Daniel Tanguay, *Argument*, vol 6, no 2, p.29, 2004)

As in the cosmetics or pharmacology industry, cyberculture presents new technologies to us as so many products capable of making the myth of eternal youth a reality. As the body ages, the machine never ceases to rejuvenate, to offer itself new things, year after year, to improve itself constantly, eternally; the end of the day being to throw away with pleasure the worn out, old-fashioned machine and replace it with the revolutionary new model with a sexier design. Here ! you will agree a seductive appeal far superior to our funeral. Some philosophers see it as a regression of humanity and intelligence. Perhaps ! Except that the man is ready to do anything not to die!

Moreover, post-humanist utopias teach us a lot about the conditions of modern man. Indeed, what implication lurks behind these futuristic thoughts? It will be up to Wiener to say it with disarming clarity : “We have changed our environment so radically that we have to modify ourselves to live on the scale of this new environment. In other words, man has so damaged the ecological cycle of the planet that he has endangered himself and in doing so, he must leave the biological cycle if he is to survive. But we have to admit it; humanity succeeded in recreating the forces of death long before those of life. Freud is right, Thanatos (death instinct) has always won over Eros (life instinct) in human history until now that we think of the atomic bomb, repeated genocides, climate change and the appalling extinction of plant and animal species.

Faced with this new light, we can almost thank post-humanism for revealing to us the possible escalation of science instrumentalised towards the destruction of life. However, cyberspace is a mental landscape where man exploits his possibilities for speculation and foresight in order to go beyond, rather get rid of, “natural” places which prevent him from fulfilling his divine destiny. The West has given itself immortality as a horizon and the post-humanist is ready to sacrifice himself so that this civilization succeeds in its historic bet: to last forever in the freshness of the virtual youth of cyberspace.

Let us be clear from the outset because there is a snag and a sizeable bone with post-humanism. Even though our abstract abilities allow us to reproduce organ-

ic nature with amazing accuracy, our knowledge of the nature of life does not exceed that of the ancient Greeks so much so that transferring from the organic to the inorganic and vice versa. versa to the point of being able to download the informational content of our brain in cyberspace has an incredible temporal dimension, as well to say pouring void into nothingness.

First, let us be sure that the era of the silicon chip will never replace the gene and the extraordinary adaptability of the biosphere. Second, artificial intelligence has nothing to do with brain intelligence. So to transfer them one into the other ... (Fisher, Argument, vol 6, no 2, 2004)

Assuming that we are able to do it, which is far from being the case, the only downloading of the information contained in our neurons would require 10 billion years without counting the 25 billion years necessary to previously store information on a hard drive that would require almost unimaginable RAM. As for the neuronal connection between organic and inorganic materials, let's not even think about it; an antinomy. (According to computer experts consulted by Dery in *Virtual Speed*). It is technically nearly impossible to fulfill the promises of post-humanism. Moreover, the nature and the environmental crisis that are looming and our nuclear "ethics" risk causing us to disappear long before that. From man / machine fusion, only sales, repair services and spare parts and insurance will find their account. All cultural engineering studies are formal: the main function of modern culture is to facilitate economic growth.

Despite the present impossibility of neuronal downloading, we must not forget

that all the laboratories are working on experimental scenarios which promote post-humanism and that man is the only being of creation capable of modifying the course of his sound. evolution. The cybernetic utopia is paved with good intentions : the avoidance of diseases thanks to the genetically modified man (Watson), the creation of the immortal man (Haseltine), the bionic man (Stelarc), the *Venus Envy* , the aesthetic utopia of dream body (Haiken,

Natasha Vita-More) or the androgyne, cybernetic utopia (Haraway) and finally, disappearance of the biological body in favor of the computer brain evolving in a strictly artificial space : cyberspace (Hawking).

Do you need to remember that the development of new technologies is dependent on military research. Did you know that teams of army and navy officers sift through all the scientific discoveries of experimental science to detect possible military applications? The army gets everything. Proof of this comical event as revealed by Gertrude Stein in her book dedicated to Picasso: at the start of the 1914 war, Picasso, boulevard Raspail in Paris, watches the first military trucks covered with stains of paint intended to camouflage them. Picasso then exclaimed in dismay: "This camouflage is

cubism. "In fact, we learned later that the army had formed a unit of famous painters responsible for designing and producing camouflages of all kinds. Thus, despite Picasso, Cubism made its contribution to "the art of war." »(Papon, Time for ruptures, 2004)

Today the ideological convergence between the Pentagon and the video game industry is evident. War is now presented as a video game where soldiers



become guinea pigs of technical applications. Art and experimental science are subordinate to the military-industrial complex, the work of which is heavily funded.

Today, the world of scientific and university research is inevitably condemned to collaborate with the industrial world subject to the financial “logic” of globalization. It all started in earnest with the publication in 2002 of the famous “NBIC” report (nanotechnology, biotechnology, information, technology and cognitive science ...) commissioned by the US government via the *National Science Foundation* (NSF) and the *Department of Commerce* (DOF). Objective: to have some fifty renowned American scientists draw up a great futuristic portrait of the future of our civilization and of humanity ... all in no less than 400 pages. Their conclusion is clear: on the basis of the convergence of nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, information technologies and cognitive sciences ... it will become possible to realize the wildest fantasies such as interactions between humans and machines, the disappearance of obstacles to generalized communication, in particular those resulting from languages, access to inexhaustible sources of energy, the end of environmental degradation. (in *National Science Foundation Report 2002*).

The cyborg is part of the order book of all the major space agencies, especially the Japanese, which already has a phenomenal head start. The presence of humans on Mars is at the limit of our current physical and psychological capacities. Beyond Mars, the conquest of space belongs to the cyborg. Space medicine, nanotechnologies, the cybernetic circuit and quantum mathematics are therefore at work.

Since the dawn of ancient times, man has driven the same point powerfully : to dominate nature and surpass the human condition. The cybernetic Australopithecus being only the bio-technological metamorphosis of our ancestor, his final mutation. Like the flame (verticality) of the primordial fire, he wants to physically leave this horizontal world and begin his conquest of the Universe. May the power, “may the force be with you !” And this unexpected shift in our revolutionary hopes, from politics and theology to contemporary technology, is explained by innovations that bring us closer to the desired future. So much so that these metaphysical, artistic, scientific abstractions should be taken seriously because the junction of art to science increasingly confirms the desires of hegemony of the scientist / artist since cybernetic thought is indeed the one that today think the world. The future is sidereal.

Mutant virtual body

Surrounded on all sides by genetics, cloning, computer techno, cyber culture, hatred of organic and inorganic promoting the ontological project XXIth century increasingly precise : mutate and disappear.

This is why all the artists of cyberculture have placed their desire for transcendence in the hands of technosciences as a sort of magical thought, a techno-animism at the service of the metaphysics of the body, of its epiphany.

Make no mistake, postmodern also means postbiotic “where robotic life forms capable of autonomous thoughts and procreation will develop to constitute entities as complex as ourselves.” Soon we will willingly transfer our minds to computer memory or robotic bodies, and take leave of this weak flesh that encumbers us. “ (Dery / Moravec, *Virtual Speed*, 1997 p.18) Again we are in electronic millenarian prophecy of eternal salvation when our power fantasies always escape ethics.

Only cyber-technology can make the desire for immortality a reality by stopping the cycle of evolutionary biology by extracting the spirit from the body then propelled into the “Nirvanet” where we cross appearances like transparencies, like an “imprint of ‘angel. “

The cycle of natural selection comes to an end. From biological evolution, (This is my body) we will move on to cybernetic improvement (This is my software) where unnecessary organs will be replaced by new gadgets, the body will be prosthesis: Ecce Homo Techno.

“We are at the age of soft technologies, genetic and mental software. The prostheses of the industrial age, the machines were still returning to the body to modify the image - they themselves were metabolized in the imagination, and this metabolism was part of the image of the body. But when we reach a point of no return in the simulation, when (nanotechnological) prostheses infiltrate the anonymous and micro-molecular heart of the body, when they impose themselves on the body itself as a matrix, burning all the symbolic circuits subsequent, any possible body being only its immutable repetition - then this is the end of the body and its history: the individual is no more than a cancerous metastasis of his basic formula. “ (Baudrillard, 1979, p.235)

“In a thousand years we will be machines or gods. “ (Sterling)

The virtual body underlines the victory of pure reason, of spirit over matter. This victory passes through disembodiment, a liberation of the spirit from its carnal prison. This pure spirit takes on the attributes of deity. The cybernetic body image is one of the most revealing mirrors in Hollywood cinema. James Cameron’s film *Terminator I* offers us a contemporary resurrection of a body reconstructed from dead organs and inert objects. Thus the body can no longer die since its vital force is now relayed by the omnipotence of science. In fact, cyberculture reveals to us the great metaphysical project of technosciences which is developing without human knowledge.

To do this, it must be understood that cyberculture is only the technological result of monotheistic religious philosophy concerning nature and the body. Cyberculture “drinks from the syncretic sources of all cultures and religions. It cements the scattered elements torn from vanished mythologies. Then he recomposes everything with the thoroughness of a prodigious sorcerer ”; it is constantly reinventing itself, integrating new technological developments as they are invented. (Christian Noorbergen, *Les distances du divin*, in *Artension*, Nov-Dec 2003)

“We are witnessing a deification of knowledge, that is to say” knowledge prevailing as a value over human life, which makes it possible to justify all the excesses of biological experiments. »(Drouin, *The Other Future*, 1989)

“I think a lot of Teilhard de Chardin; he was talking about the noosphere, which would be the connection of all fields of human consciousness, and which becomes more and more powerful as civilization advances; and he said that God wants to have someone of his level to talk to, and that’s what humanity is creating little by little. I couldn’t describe to you better what I think is happening. » (Barlow in *Virtual Speed*, p. 58)

Because God cannot die like all archetypes, he can only transform himself, take the color of the habits and customs of societies like a chameleon! At most, God as an archetype can fade away, be absent for the time of his transformation, he always reappears. Thus the postmodern gospel reads as follows: the new post-humanist consciousness announces the advent of an Ultra-humanity converging at an Omega Point - a cosmic Christ who would be the completion of evolution in the noosphere (de Chardin). This “generation of Total Leap will enter the Hyper-mind (...) leaving behind the last residues of matter. (Clarke). Having reached the point where the odyssey of outer space and that of the inner odyssey meet, the being can finally transcend his humanity to access the realm of the sacred. (in *Virtual speed*)

“To any scientific achievement therefore corresponds a dynamic myth: Icarus is the myth of aviation, Prometheus that of atomic energy stealing from the stars their secret to give it to men, the golem is that of the automaton, that of the cybernetics. Dynamic myths do not act at the conscious level in our society: (...) the dynamic myth emerges at the level of global scientific society, as an organizing tendency that modulates the flow of discoveries and unconsciously directs individual steps. “ (Abraham Moles quoted in” *In the image of man* “, Breton, 1995)

The dynamic myth of our time is the saint of the Scriptures who by his asceticism no longer wants to be a slave to matter. It is also the “purified body” of Pythagoras but in both cases, this does not mean to despise the body but to affirm a spiritual life stronger than the passions and the carnal sufferings. In cyberculture, this mystical idealism is rather fantasized to the extreme.

“History is only an eternal restart. “ (Trucyde)

This mystical theology of Light is the very essence of the arts of cyberculture, where the work without support, without materials, without body, is expressed in the luminous fluidity of the bytes. : Malevich’s white square without the frame support = light.

The body / work becomes evanescent, absorbed by the pure Spirit of the electronic network / mandala. Immateriality, timelessness, reversal of the metaphysics of “the Word became flesh” by the “flesh which becomes Light. »Extreme fusion of the organic in the inorganic, final exit from the natural cycle of life and death. As at the beginning, our spirit / signal will wander in the universe / network like the Australopithecus on earth but without the pangs of natural life. We have barely come, for some, to free ourselves from the monotheistic

sky and hell that already points the cyber sky. Definitely, “the future is behind us. “ (Riton)

“The party is over, the time has come to choose sides. “

Artists and scientists are therefore engaged in a long procedure of decreation, of dematerialization, the pixel gurus will say. All the great philosophical, religious, artistic political, scientific theories have been based on a representation of man; men equal in democracy, men enslaved in dictatorship. For the bio-sciences, the body is indeed a malleable, modifiable representation of man; for cybernetics, man can merge with the machine or vice versa but, never in the history of humanity, we have had to deal with a representation of man which implies his physical disappearance, that is to say which foresees the exit of the body from its terrestrial universe by the creation of interfaces between the body and the digital software to propel us into the immateriality of the virtual operational space.

“Knowledge has been transformed with us into a passion which is not afraid of any sacrifice, and has basically only one fear, that of extinguishing itself ... The passion of knowledge may destroy humanity. We may have come to the idea of ??humanity sacrificing itself, not on the altar of truth, but on the altar of knowledge. “ (Edelman Bernard, 1991)

“Hell is believing yourself in paradise by mistake.” (Simone Weil)

The primordial waters of the newly elected continent are cyberspace where everything vanishes. More skin, body, races, more sex roles, more desires, needs, disappearance of the social, of politics, of economic ideologies, disappearance of otherness, of the other, all that matters individual salvation in the dizziness of disappearance.

“Is this vertigo dangerous?” At first glance, probably. But thanks to him, we finally free ourselves from shackles, dogma, ideology and repression. Through vertigo, we can finally be free completely, forever (and lose ourselves, it is true in this freedom). In the face of vertigo, being a man or a woman, a Jew, a Buddhist Christian or a Muslim is irrelevant. Facing the void, we move, letting our old ideological skins slide under our feet. Faced with emptiness, we are naked. Nudes and first. Free from an almighty God, from an inherent happiness and unhappiness, from a stifling fate. Faced with emptiness, there are no untouchables. Everyone now has the opportunity to be what they want, to be reborn in what they choose, to destroy themselves in what they want. The children of the void will not be sinners, nor condemned, nor chosen. They will simply be. Everything will be possible for them. Their existence will be their universe. “

“We are moving forward today towards this world with enthusiasm and hope, but without really understanding what we are, without really recognizing to whom or to what, historically and politically, we belong. On this continent, we celebrate the end of our racial, national, religious and sexual identities, because we rightly see there the possibility of a new beginning, but we also deplore the

sudden emptiness of our beings. On *Continent X*, we are universal and amnesiac, freed from the prisons of human thought and dogmas, but also from any bondage and any fidelity. “

(...) “One thing is certain whatever one thinks of this continent, it will not disappear, because never in the history of humanity have we turned our backs on a transformation. We have never backed down from a scientific breakthrough, never have we ignored a technological discovery, regardless of whether they were good or bad ...” (Dyens, *Continent X*, 2003, p. 152 -153)

The last paragraph of this quote is very disturbing. First, it demonstrates that ethics has never succeeded in imposing itself to stop the will to power in action, at most, it can slow down the process. Second, this whole post-humanist philosophy rests on the existential bankruptcy of man. Let us take only the relation of man with his environment, the Kyoto protocol, which would make it possible to slow down the greenhouse effect, although ratified, will perhaps never be respected. We all know that the greenhouse effect endangers millions of animal and plant species and will cause ecological and meteorological cataclysms, the consequences of which we are already suffering. Our lack of courage is symptomatic of the predicted catastrophe. And the rapid evolution of the situation will mean that our “ethicists” will always be a step behind reality. Post-humanism will thus become the “historical victory” of the animus, the victory of reason, the defeat of the anima and of nature in their disappearance.

“Our utopias are placed on the verge of despair. “

We are faced with deadlines that call for a radical change in mentalities. But this awareness of humanity is once again at the level of the crisis as if we were unable to “prevent in order to cure.” Desertification, pollution, epidemics, famine, civil wars, ethnic massacres, religious fanaticism, these are the symptoms of a sick planet. The increased interest in cetaceans and polar bears is commensurate with the possibilities of their imminent extinction. Yet for centuries writers like Whitman and Thoreau have spoken to us about threatened nature and reminded us of the desperate prophecies of great fallen Native American chiefs.

“No doubt they all speak of the decline of ‘ our civilization ‘, but they usually leave open the question of whether ‘ our ‘ should relate to human civilization in general or only to its western phase. The problem to be resolved in this case therefore logically comes down to the following question : where do the internal tendencies which threaten “ our ” Western civilization with decadence originate and what must lead to ? Do they belong to a causal system interesting only the western phase of civilization, that is to say a period not exceeding a thousand years? “ (From Mann, *Age of the Masses*)

Perfectible body

Spengler called our civilization Faustian. Faust represents man’s desire to have “much more than God and the Devil can give him. »Faust incarnates in him these forces because of his will of power and perfection which knows no limits,

because of his ambition to dominate nature, dynamism where in his conception of life and the world, progress does not neither truce nor rest. The philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment expressed precisely this idea according to which the human being is not defined by any fixed essence. A founding value of modern humanism, at the heart of the major democratic, scientific and technical advances of our Western societies, the notion of perfectibility assumes that human beings only realize their humanity by tearing away from nature. The idea of ??human perfectibility is consecutive to the advent of modernity. It is a modern invention. (Nicolas Le Dévédec, *From humanism to post-humanism: the mutations of human perfectibility*, *Revue du MAUSS*, December 21, 2008)

The notion of perfectibility makes it possible to understand society as a creation, a properly human work. Another design of perfectibility refers to the human ability to make, thanks to the progress of science and technology, so the body is apprehended since the XVIIth century as a “have” more than “being” in other words, like a machine obeying the laws of mechanics and capable of being modified, improved. Except that the finality of the perfectible implies that the tearing of man from nature also means the tearing of man from his own body.

Art constitutes a part of this same process of dissolution which is only a phenomenon complementary to the symptoms of social and psychological decomposition. In this too there is a whole range of which we can follow the nuances in the evolution of, impressionism to surrealism via symbolism and expressionism, just as the doctor follows the progress of a neurosis or a psychosis. Since expressionist art, the human figure, like the world, has only declined.

Google-image / by Kooning women

This is why modern art has ceaselessly poured into historicism and exoticism by unceasingly and deliberately seeking new inspiration in older or foreign styles dominated by the feeling it takes to at all costs express something other than the world of what exists, quite simply because the precondition : a new meaning given to life and to the world by a new community among men, does not exist.

Art has thus become objectless in a double sense : by losing its social mission it has lost respect for things in the outside world. The artist has no other mission than to “ express himself.” The only thing that still counts is the “ subject “ to the detriment of the “ object “ to the point where the artist is only interested in what is happening in himself. Most of us are not lacking in knowledge and general culture, yet we act like we haven’t seen it coming. Why ?

“Science explores; Technology performs; Man conforms. “ (Theme of the Chicago International Fair, 1933)

But unlike the utopias of past centuries which were proposed as a distant ideal, modern utopias appear to be imminent and realistically operational in our current development. All the technological advances make us glitter an effortless perfectionism towards social bliss under the dictatorship of the megamachine. Let us not forget: in the face of technology, “man conforms. “

We all find ourselves, politicians, economists, trade unionists, scientists, artists, ordinary citizens, trapped in a logic of cultural vision much deeper than our political choices. Whether one is left, right, centrist, anarchist on the Internet, it does not matter since in any case, the entire West has been fascinated and possessed by the myth of the machine. However, the current technocracy is the totalitarian outcome of a culturally machinist tradition that has imposed itself, encrusted since the Middle Ages. However, in the face of all despotism, the majority of men are crushed. “Voluntary servitude” you say! Nothing more wrong!

“Alas, if it were voluntary, this servitude would mean that as a last resort people are truly free. Tomorrow if they really wanted to, they could break free from bondage. However, I believe that this is theoretically possible, but that, in practice, it does not make sense, (...) those who live today in this society obsessed with money, who are forced to think without stopping to their savings account book, their retirement, their shares, their life insurance ... those who watch TV as it exists today, can we say that they have given in to bondage, that their bondage is voluntary?” (Pierre Thuillier, www.mediaport.net/HumainsAssociés)

Volunteer, no! Involuntary yes! Because there is bondage. Since Antiquity, man has been ready to sell off his freedom for more security. And that's where Zarathustra comes in. When Zarathustra walks through this ancient city where everything is shrunk, he sees the result of a successful and unchallenged policy of taming: it seems to him that men have succeeded in raising a new human variant. They have freely submitted to domestication and the choice of breeding which leads to domestic behavior. Zarathustra's strange criticism of humanity stems from his awareness of the false innocence with which modern supposedly good man surrounds himself.

We cannot speak of innocence, however, if men deliberately choose to elevate themselves to be innocent. Nietzschean prevention towards any humanist culture rests on the discovery of the secret of human domestication. He wishes to denounce and reveal the secret function of those who have appropriated the monopoly of breeding - priests and teachers who present themselves as friends of man to better control him. Nietzsche postulates here the basic conflict for the future: the struggle between small and large herders of man - which we could also define as the struggle between humanists and super-humanists, Post-humanism is therefore the opening of new possibilities for breeding, training and domestication of man.

“In this Big Brother world, ravaged by pollution, scarcity and overpopulation of ‘Green Sun’, as we generally imagine it, the chimeras of ‘*The Island of Doctor Moreau*’ converge (HG Wells, 1896), the “robots”, these mechanical workers invented by Capek in 1921, the “numbers”, these crowds of Taylorized engineers, described by Zamiatine (“We others”, 1926), and the police technologies of Philip K. Dick in the sixties. In short, a world where, contrary to the old dogma of the Emancipation Party, power would have by its technical means, its plots, its terror, not only the capacity to crush all opposition, but to put an end to history by incarceration of each in the universal machine. “ (Serge Trottein,”

Nietzsche's post-humanism: reflections on a hyphen “, Noesis, N ° 10, <http://noesis.revues.org/document662.html>.)

Even today, especially since the collapse of the New York Twin Towers, exponential security measures surround the individual who does not see the long-term trap. What to do when the size of our companies becomes so enormous that it will be almost impossible to manage it humanely? Oddly, questions of power are still absent in post-humanist writing. Questions as simple as “Who made these machines”? “Who wrote the computer program”? are always evacuated in favor of a dubious silence on the political issues involved here. We prefer artistic blur.

“The world to come will be like this. Technology acclimates us, trains us, deforms us, creates needs, models brains according to the machine of which man becomes a complement. » (Patrick Rambaud, *Siècle rebelle*, p. 198)

This technical system is extremely rigid and complex. So much so that even the lucidity necessary for the revolt remains confined to a small group that we refuse to hear, reinforcing the immobility of the system. One does not change the trajectory of the machine as a dominant cult so easily, so much so that for all these reasons, the system is rather heading towards its implosion, a complete collapse. (Thuillier, *The Great Implosion*, 1995)

None other than the video *happiness in slavery* has demonstrated this reversal of values. Rejecting any organized policy in favor of a strictly individualistic ideology of personal salvation, the characters move in a setting of devouring machines to which they submit, going so far as to sleep with a sexual machine which will be the instrument of their destruction; a praying mantis machine which annihilates the progenitor.

Google-video / nin-happiness in slavery dailymotion

“We approach the XXIth century with powers demiurges and primate instincts. “ (Thierry Gaudin)

We are also witnessing a real geopolitics of the interior, art, science, technology revealing to us more and more every day that the body is the new territory to be conquered. This neocolonialism from the inside through transgenics and other technosciences is only the result of a logic of domination where the market is sovereign. The gene is not a soul but a negotiable, copiable and manipulable good. Is ! But who controls this market? The same people who run the global economy now; manufacturers stuffed with the bible of progress to the point of devastating life in all its components. It is a real techno-fascism which currently assails nature and tell yourself that the current state of nature, attacked by pesticides and herbicides, is the reflection of what awaits your viscera and organs nourished by anti-hepatitis bananas, omega 3 rapeseed and hormone meats.

The entire transgenic industry is selecting which species are profitable to the detriment of others, including humans and this represents the most terrifying

totalitarian drift of neoliberal capitalism. Stalin and Hitler are not dead. New men, Aryan fetuses with blue eyes, biomedical surveillance for more civil security; everything is in place! No more place to hide.

“They wanted to change life before they even discovered it. “

It is not a question of crying disaster on principle but of understanding that the technosciences are setting up a strategic campaign plan of a megalomania never reached and that the more the plan advances, the more it will be impossible for us to reverse. That's a think about it! Because for them, the world is not what is but what they can do with it.

“Commercial technology penetrates into the very heart of human genes, but also into any gene, thus overthrowing a new Chinese wall ... The social contract changes nature: the complete appropriation of the world is underway. (...) This one is already well launched, the transgenization of all existing life is quite possible, whether it is to remake a clean planet and more resistant to capitalist damage or to make the species more compatible with an environment of more and more degraded. The food issue would be settled. Flora and fauna would resist pollution. We would always necessarily be in good health. (...) Not only would capitalism thus provide unmitigated proof of its omnipotence, but control of the entire environment, including human society, would finally be total: an infinitely captive market, in which everything that is alive is patented and reproducible in series. Utopia realized ... ” (Sensor, 1998)

For some artists and scientists, evolution inevitably walks towards its destiny and this is our horizon, for others, the protest is organized, there will indeed be resistance and it will be futuristic, not backward-looking. Since it is impossible for us to live in harmony with nature, let us leave it definitively by leaving our body for cyberspace, resistance in flight.

Cybernetics in posthuman art bears the mark of a lack and a desire. Posthumanity is not just science fiction; it is a fiction that wants to be scientific turned towards a desire for transcendence.

Demiurgical body

“To undo, to de-create, is the only task that man can assign himself, if he aspires, as everything indicates, to distinguish himself from the Creator. “ (Cioran)



Bruno Schulz is perhaps the only philosopher to have approached totalitarianism from the angle of spirituality: the desire of man to be god is his radical evil. Bruno Schulz is sensitive to the attacks of an evil of living, which merges with the very short Evil which he took care of to show the aspects. This radical Evil, Schulz knows well. And for good reason, he who knew the horrors of Nazism and its demiurge named Adolphe Hitler.

“Here the *Führer Mythos* had truly become ‘a cult of Hitler’ and Himmler himself often referred to him as a ‘Gottmensch’ (God-man). » (Robert A. Pois, *The religion of nature and national socialism*, p.87)

It is curious how the writings of the 1930s can prove to be prescient in our time. By attempting to unmask Hitler, Polish philosopher Bruno Schulz assassinated by the Nazis in 1942 sheds light on the ontology of hegemonism, the demiurgic project of the decreation of the original model : the deity complex as the psychological foundation of the totalitarian despot. The creation of a pure race (Nazism), of the new man (homo sovieticus) has always been at the heart of totalitarian ideology.

Decreation explained (?)

We have lived too long terrorized by the Demiurge, too long the perfection of his work has paralyzed our own initiative. But we don't want to compete with him. We have no ambition to match it. We want to be creators in our own lower sphere, we aspire to the pleasures of creation, in a word, to demiurgy. The Demiurge does not have the monopoly of creation: creation is the privilege of all minds. Matter has an infinite fertility, an inexhaustible force and at the same time a power of seduction which pushes us to shape it.

In the depths of the material imprecise smiles emerge, conflicts arise, sketched shapes condense. It ripples entirely with unfinished possibilities that cross it with shivering waves. While waiting for an invigorating breath, it oscillates endlessly and tempts us with millions of soft and gentle curves born from its dark delirium. Deprived of its own initiative, malleable and lascivious, docile to all impulses, it constitutes a lawless domain open to countless dilettantisms, charlatanism, all abuses, the most shady demiurgic manipulations. She is what is most passive, most disarmed in the Universe. Everyone can knead it and shape it in their own way. We owe it to ourselves to penetrate all the currents favorable to the subjugation of this one: art, science, philosophy, economy and especially religion, privi-

leged place of all manipulations and demiurgic fanaticisms. Once these currents are well invested, politics will follow. Everything must be consumed.

All the structures of matter are fragile and unstable, subject to regression and dissolution. We are corruption and the land is our pandemonium. Reality will thus be perverted, evacuated in favor of a fictitious and burlesque frivolity of the Man-God. Seduction of disaster.

The Demiurge was in love with solid, complicated and refined materials, such is his universe. To beauty, we will oppose our fascination with ugliness. We will make the unnecessary a necessity. We give preference to junk. We are attracted and positively seduced by junk, for all that is vulgar and ordinary. Do you understand the deep meaning of this cult of idols, of this passion for the object, by this precedence of the object over being: bulimia of the gadget, anorexia of feelings? Well, it is our idolatrous love for matter as such, for its fluffy, porous nature, for its mystical and unfinished consistency. We love its dissonance, its resistance, its rough clumsiness. In short, we want to create man a second time, in the image of matter; the man-idol of himself: a mystical tautology in the excess and obscenity of the man-object. Narcogenic spectacle of technoscience.

Our creatures will therefore be in our imperfect image and thus called to life. For example, we will give them only half a face, a leg, a hand, the one that will be necessary for their social role. It would be pure pedantry to be concerned with a second element if it is not intended to come into play. We will create the homunculus, the new fuel for mechanical society.

Our homunculi will be perfectly adapted to their environment. Through skillful genetic manipulation, the homunculus will form a generation of semi-organic beings nourished by photosynthesis. It will matter little to them that the snow is yellow, that the rains are acid, that the architecture and the obese structure of megalopolis are offensive. Our creatures belong to the future, that is, adaptable to pollution, not caring about concrete, asphalt or the greenhouse effect let alone trees, plants and animals called anyway to disappear because replaced by our artificial clones: pseudo-flora and pseudo-fauna. Evacuation of the organic.

We offer ourselves in sacrifice so that our creatures can live. Our spiritual and physical decreation is a sacrifice necessary for the “liberation” of our creatures in total alienation and granted by escaping this consciousness which, precisely, made us a human. Renunciation of reason, loss of self-consciousness, return to the prenatal of the Universe, our fulfillment in the degeneration of human nature. Decreation guaranteed.

(La décréation explained is an adaptation of *Rue des Crocodiles* in “*Les Boutiques de Cannelles*” written by Bruno Schulz, Édition Denoël, 1974)

Installed on the edge of infinity, the characters of Schulz go about their lamentable business while behind them unfolds another ideological drama, that of

depravity and totalitarian degradation.

The tragicomedy, which Schulz describes, strangely resembles the one we know at the dawn of the new millennium. He tries to dismantle the mechanism of the market economy: “junk and junk replace quality goods; the urban fabric is degraded by poorly constructed buildings with caricature facades. But above all, he made the mannequin (the Treatise on the mannequin) the symbol of the alienation of the man bewitched by so many golden calves, a veritable “voluntary servitude.” By mannequin, Schulz therefore means a mind alienated in matter, a subject turned object. By showing these active human organs as passive and almost edible objects, Schulz has just crossed a limit which violates an immemorial taboo within us: man who has become an object is himself consumable.

But beware ! Here there is no pamphleteering dispute but rather ironic reversal where modernity and its symbols - junk, junk and mannequin become objects of adoration in a sort of theatrical sublimation of contemporary society, bordering on commercial comedy, a premonitory vision of pop art and kitsch, almost thirty years ago. The perfect simulacrum is the one that contaminates reality. Are we more real than these puppets? Everything happens as if each of the characters is doubled by kitsch signs which degrade him, annihilate him as if the end of the world has already taken place; postmodern vision of man as a spectacle of himself.

This desire for power turns against the human, life in general to the point where he begins to dream of another world, of another life. There then occurs an inversion of values ??where the instinct of life is supplanted by the instinct of death; the risk of living becomes subject to the immobility of security which, under the pretext of improving man, tries to domesticate him, to subdue him. Emptied of his existential content, man, this mad god, becomes neurotic to the point of hoping for his transcendence in his own disappearance. To no longer have to contemplate the nothingness, we throw ourselves into it.

For Shultz, demiurgy is therefore this desire to create a new man, regardless of the consequences, despite the Evil. It is here that the symbolism of artificial creatures from the golem to the cyborg merges as a totalitarian design of religion, art, science, politics. Already before the father of “metaphysical painting” De Chirico in canvases with melancholic if not distressing atmospheres revealed all the discomfort if not the traumas of the time when men are replaced by mannequins moving in cold, inhuman settings. De Chirico in his writings teaches us that he wanted to “teach us the deep meaning of the nonsense of life” as if man since the industrial era had transformed the world into still life.

The common denominator of all these drifts is indeed the advent of the new man where everyone, the priest, the imam, the rabbi, the despot, the scholar, the politician, the artist, wants to recreate a second time the man in his image. However, this fantasy of the magnified man is at the heart of all the totalitarian movements that have been the crusades, genocides all over the place, Nazism, Stalinism, Maoism, economic ultra-liberalism, religious fundamentalism or biotechnical and computer fundamentalism and in many cases with the complicity

ity of democratic governments. These ultimate creation psychopaths are well and truly mad about God. Today we are witnessing a race against time towards the deity of man, the most fundamental neurosis of man. This deity complex being the neurotic response of man alienated by religious dogmatism.

Since Homo habilis, for 3 million years, we have striven by dint of renouncements, oppressions, cruelty, sexual repression, religious myths, artistic works to keep us away by the culture of common animality to all species. For 2 million years, we have invested in increasingly complex societies to avoid the disorder that lurks around us in nature and in us, ex-animals. We have polished our instincts, killed our neighbors, and admitted our weaknesses as sins that only god could forgive. All this to realize that we were so afraid of our natural bestiality that we were fascinated by the human order to the point of accepting its totalitarian drifts which, ironically, propels us back into the world of animal barbarities.

And in many respects, this natural violence, with the passage of time, appears to us quite harmless, comparative observation assures us, compared to the filthy cruelties and tortures that our species inflicts on its own members. We have to admit that, despite the laws, codes, religions, States, reason and knowledge, we have failed miserably and are so ashamed that we only aspire to disappear.

As if our anxiety to exist was such that we declared war on life itself. In the absence of being powerful, humanity begins to want to possess power through power, even if it means destroying itself. This “soteriological” neurosis of salvation leads man / savior to his downfall. The incessant and exaggerated use of the means of destruction available to the subject to fight God is what we will call the deity complex. The deity complex being a collective sublimation (deification) of our personal will to power. Through the deity complex, “the inhumanity of humanity”, barbarism is actualized. As if through this neurosis man had lost the secret which allows man’s humanity to be maintained.

“From the point of view of existential analysis, to claim ‘to be like God’ is to condemn oneself to neurosis. (...) Man will be seized more and more by fever: he must prove to himself his necessity, his equality with God, his certainty that “without him, nothing will go”: He is overwhelmed then more and more burdens, duties, demands, output, multiplies fights and techniques, but thereby only increases his feelings of guilt, that multiplies the reproaches he addresses to himself, and all this only because in his disgust at being only a man, he pursues an absurd goal. » (Drewermann, *Le Mal*, 1996, p.10-11)

From the deity of man as the spiritual foundation of modernity to the demiurgic temptation, the step was easily taken: the deity complex (man-god, master of the world) would be to modernity what demiurgy (god, creator universe) is in the archaic period. We can see here a transgression of the divine order: not only did modern man work to master nature, he also decided to mold it in his image; to become in turn the creator of the universe.

At the beginning of the last century, the scientific method succeeded in “ordering the mechanics” of the natural and social world; she also naturally sought to

apply this method to man himself. The new field of research in science is now to recreate life in the laboratory with the utopian project of a new superhuman and uniform race. Uniformization and standardization will invade the field of human consciousness at the same rate as the standardization of nature. At the turn of the century, Asia produced more than 120 varieties of rice, America cultivated more than 900 species of pear trees; in both cases today barely ten varieties remain. To variety will oppose instrumentalism which imposes its discourse, that of certainties. This race for biological uniformity is as foolish as the search for a single thought; a fatal error.

“Culture after culture has forged its own response to this problem by producing types of ideals, and embodying them in an endless succession of models in the person of its gods, heroes, saints and wise. But it turned out that none of these models or their variations was ever quite successful, never universally applicable. To speak only of the Greeks, neither Zeus, nor Apollo, nor Prometheus, nor Hephaestus, nor Heracles, nor Achilles, nor Ulysses meet all the needs. If we look to the more conscious efforts of religion and philosophy to embody an ideal human type, we are also baffled in our choice: Confucianist, Taoist, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Platonist, Stoic, Cynic, Christian, Mohammedan, all produced their own conceptions of the perfect man, largely as a defensive negation of the cruder types who had dominated ancient civilization. (...) I conclude that what this means is that the only effective way to approach this problem is the one that nature has long adopted: to provide the possibility of infinite variety. of biological and cultural types, given that no single type, however rich, however rewarding, is capable of embracing all the latent potentialities of man. No single culture, no single race, no single period can do more than produce new variations on this inexhaustible theme. » (Mumford, *Le Mythe de la machine*, t.II, 1974, p.391)

Since the Origins, the vocation of man has been the search for balance between harmony and power, while, for half a millennium, the spirit of man has been oriented towards the excess of the only power. Let us not forget that the West created democracy but also colonialism, fascism, totalitarianism and the new technocracy.

The technique does not create meaning, there are only abstractions, images, objects where the entire production process is erased in favor of consumption alone. We have gone beyond the “spectacle society” to become the spectacle ourselves; actor in a new world which is improvised as technological discoveries progress. We are locked in an “artificial work” that we have patiently worked out for so many centuries. The “corpus” of the artificial work is simple but with plural and complex consequences: man has always invented “technical” tools to replace or replace a deficient organ: the ax replacing the bare fist, so look more closely, to be replaced by inorganic objects (stone, iron) of the organic. In this sense, the post-humanism, post-biotic concept is both of prehistoric and modern origin, and therefore timeless.

The entire development of the technique is undoubtedly based on the transfer of properties and functions from the organic to the inorganic because the properties of the inorganic are more easily discovered. Thus, we can easily reproduce

organic nature with astonishing accuracy while our knowledge of the nature of life is grossly deficient. It is therefore easier to imitate, to substitute the inorganic object for life; this is the essence of industrialization: replaced the worker (organic) by the machine (inorganic); this is the essence of post-humanism: creating post-biotic (inorganic) beings / concepts to the detriment of biological (organic) life; in short, to affirm the “totalitarianism” of thought, of the mind over matter as well as conceptual art.

“To liquidate the present for the benefit of a hypothesis. “

“The danger of the factories of corpses and dungeons consists in this: today with the generalized demographic growth, with the increasing number of men without fire or place, masses of people are constantly reduced to becoming superfluous, if we persist in conceiving our world in utilitarian terms. Political, social and economic events are everywhere tacitly in contact with the totalitarian machinery designed to make men superfluous. » (Hannah Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, Seuil, 1972, p.201)

Man outside of existence is the homunculus attached to the current routines of the office, factory, laboratory, school or university, based on the sterile postulates of the power system of the megamachine. More than essentially political, totalitarianism is the principle of terror, is the expression of radical Evil which tends towards the complete destruction of humanity by proposing an identity of degraded man; it is a policy of annihilation of the individual.

“We must not frighten men, above all we must not understand that they are made to work for the abolition of humanity - that is to say, their own disappearance. The living world has been so invested by capitalism in order to develop new spaces for the commodity that some of its possible consequences on humanity itself have ended up breaking through the wall of silence. » (Dany-Robert Dufour *The man modified by liberalism*, Le Monde diplomatique, Paris, April 2005)

Faced with this civilizing malaise, there is always a headlong rush. We are witnessing a race against time for the physico-psychic transformation of the being by integrating the mechanical, cybernetic, quantum order no longer to participate in the civilization of the superman but to leave it as quickly as possible, to avoid disaster. Moreover, the idea is simple: after having demolished all the flattering mythologies of human illusions to reveal the imposture, after having irreparably destroyed his environment, after having discovered that the man of reason carried within him the ultimate atomic catastrophe, the man thus stripped is ready to accept any manipulation likely to save him.

Applied science and art have therefore come together to finally update the old hermetic / alchemist dream as found in the seventeen Greek treatises of the *Corpus Hermeticum* where it is written that man can “become god” through knowledge. and to do this, one must make oneself “foreign” to the world (CH XIII, I) in order to accomplish “the birth of the divinity” (XIII, 7) and man thus regenerated will have an immortal body, he is “Son of God, All in All. “ (XIII, 2) (Eliade, T-2, 1978)

Everything is therefore in place to prepare the new anthropocentric theology (homocyberlogy) of man / machine fusion, as prophesied by artistic-cybernetic gurus and the great pundits of biotechnology. Here again, Paleolithic subterfuge (disguise), same cunning of religions (simulacrum), to make us believe in desacralized art, typically human, cut off from all myths, from all religion: art for the sake of art.

Post-humanist art is the lie, the screen behind which hides the new magico-religio-metaphysical and neo-liberal alliance of mystical DNA and the resuscitated body thanks to the hermaphrodite and nanotechnologically immortal androgyny of post-humanism. cybernetics. All these movements have as common denominator a messianic ideal of the art of redeeming the world and of man, of the art of warding off the misfortunes of history: science as soteriological art.

Our individual deification will have been the continuum, with the help of religion, science, art, state, economy, the diversion of spirituality in favor of the theology of the domination of the man-God as the foundation of modernity and the deity complex will have been our fabulous neurosis. It should be remembered that Descartes’ children have the highest suicide rate in the world. The Incarnation of man, his divination in the whole man leads irremediably to his loss, to his decreation: his de-genesis.

“The original pre-individualistic harmony that reigned between man and nature and between man and woman has been replaced by conflict and struggle. Man suffers from this loss of his unity. He is alone and separated from his fellow man and from nature. His most passionate efforts tend to return to the world of union that was his before he “disobeyed.” What he wants is to give up reason, self-awareness, responsibility and return to the womb, to his Mother Earth, to the darkness where the light of consciousness and to knowledge is not yet shining. He wants to escape this freedom he has recently acquired and lose this consciousness which, precisely, makes him a human. “

“But he can’t go back. Acts of disobedience, knowledge of good and evil, awareness of oneself are irreversible things. There is no way to go back. (...) Man creates himself in the historical process that began with his first act of freedom - the freedom to disobey, to say “no”. This “corruption” is part of the very nature of human existence. (...) He can destroy himself or, on the contrary, progress towards the achievement of a new harmony. “

(...) “The more the heart of man hardens, the less he has the freedom to change, the more he is determined by his previous actions. But there comes a point of no return where a man’s heart becomes so hard and heavy that he loses all possibility of freedom and finds himself forced to move forward to the inevitable end. , which is ultimately its physical and spiritual destruction. “ (Erich Fromm, “Ye shall be as gods” 1975)

“The more a man wants to be on top, the more he feels inferior. “ (Schultz-Hencke)

Since *Genesis*, man has sought in the knowledge of good and evil to realize the promise of the Serpent: “You will be like Gods” Now our desire for deity is the origin of our radical evil which transforms us into devil and Earth in hell, our pandemonium.

“Europe is certainly this continent where Plato, Saint Francis of Assisi, Vinci, Descartes, Pascal, Newton, Kant, Hegel Kierkegaard or Nietzsche were born, the one where Aeschylus, Dante, Saint John of the Cross lived; but it was also the scene of the crimes of Phalaris, Heliogabalus, Robespierre, Stalin and Hitler, not to mention the others or their successors present and to come. All that was and remains, Europe swarmed it in America, Africa, Asia, Oceania for better and worse. But it is from Europe that the all-powerful disciples of Prometheus, Hercules, Daedalus, Tantalus and Faust also left, all heroes of knowledge and of power to whom men asked to learn what would allow them to become “like Gods.” (Jean Brun, *L’Europe philosophe*, p. 367 et seq.)

No civilization, whether Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Jewish, Chinese, Aztec, Aboriginal, Ottoman, Arab, Western, could take off without a specific metaphysics and a representation of man in the Universe. All of our current artistic, scientific, religious, socio-political and economic movements are all leftovers from a Western theology of domination. But we live, unique fact, in a civilization where the representation of man is associated with his disappearance as a species. We are entitled to wonder about the type of civilization that will be generated by this collusion.

“Sometimes the world tires us out. Our minds get confused because of him. Sometimes we find it too complicated. We don’t know how to use it. Sometimes we feel like a stranger in him. Between him and us, things are wrong. Between him and us, it’s absurd. We suffer from having only one too many people at our disposal, not to our advantage. He is playing a show for us in which we are not the main hero. He disappoints us. When suffering goes too far, we seize the intense desire to end it. We want to disappear because the world does not look enough like the other worlds we dream of inhabiting. » (Bourdil, *The other worlds*, 1999)

The sciences and philosophies may explain to us what they can, we suffer from an essential dissatisfaction. Deploring that the essence of humanity belongs to another, god, king and master, man constitutes the project of another world, even another humanity, in order to be its master, even if this revolution was unrealistic. Now, man can play the poet. He can invent worlds foreign to the very idea of ??knowledge, made up of fantasies, dreams, utopias, inhabited by strange characters, passionate, monstrous, sovereignly free to say and think anything. It is the starting point of the imagination. »(Bourdil, *The other worlds*, 1999)

“Man can only be fooled by himself. “(Emerson)

This is how man becomes the director of his world. Remember Dürer who painted himself as the Savior in a self-portrait (1493) or Gauguin who uses the same stratagem in Christ in yellow. We are witnessing an incredible autofiction

where man “transfigures his existence and his identity, in an unreal story, indifferent to plausibility. Humanity then projects itself into a heroic story, a sort of fantastic self-fabricating. (Colonna, *Autofiction & other literary mythomanias*, 2004, p.75-77)

We then ask dreams, arts, books, theater, cinema, sciences, religions, philosophies, to transform the world. Everything is going for the best until the day when the imagination seeks to extend its practical domination over reality. We are then witnessing the war of the worlds, i.e. the battle between two neurotic imaginaries, that between an illusory world in the image of God versus a world in the image of a superman, equally illusory, both finding their existential finality in their fictitious sky, paradise for one and cybersky for the other.

“At the beginning as at the end of the religious history of humanity, we find the same nostalgia for Paradise. If we take into account the fact that nostalgia for Paradise can be deciphered in the general religious behavior of man in archaic societies, we are entitled to suppose that the mythical memory of a beatitude without history haunts humanity. from the moment when man becomes aware of his situation in the Cosmos. » (Eliade, *Aspect of the Myth*, 1963)

The apogee of fantastic autofiction in the twentieth century comes to Teilhard de Chardin in *The Human Phenomenon* and *The Human Future* where he designs and adds alongside the lithosphere, the hydrosphere, the atmosphere, a new sphere that ‘he names the noosphere: a kind of “spirit film”, a layer of consciousness that spreads around the earth. In short, all of creation is on the march towards the apotheosis of abstract intelligence: the Omega Point where evolution will have reached its crowning achievement; a single, global brain where souls will lose their bodily identity to magnify themselves in pure thought itself. All post-humanist philosophy finds here, in the writings of the famous Jesuit father, its founding texts because, to reach this noosphere, man must de-created his own biological nature. Here, the scientific-mystical self-transcendence joins the fantastic self-fabulation of poets, painters and writers of all times.

“The Big Brain thinks, therefore I am not. “ (Teilhard de Chardin)

Complete reversal of Descartes’ “I think therefore I am” in favor of an artificial superstructure where all the potentialities of life are reduced to being manipulated and transformed in accordance with the demands of the electronic God.

“Hell is paved with good intentions. “

Nothing is more totalitarian and more fallacious than this sphere at the same time religious and technocratic of the future of man where life, all life, is subordinated to organized intelligence. And Teilhard de Chardin, in *The Human Phenomenon*, concludes by going to the end of his logic:

“However monstrous it may be, isn’t modern totalitarianism the distortion of something magnificent, and therefore quite close to the truth? “

There are “colossal expectations” between what men want and what they get, between what they want to be and who they are. “The result is a personal feeling of inadequacy. But the reaction to this feeling of inferiority is a renewed overcompensation (the deity), which leads to further reinforce the feeling of inferiority. Once again we come up against a vicious circle which only intensifies the inhibition of departure “: what is called” the law of increasing slavery. “The “colossal expectations” transferred to science then take an exorbitant form.

“Today, science takes the place of religious practice; it remains inaccessible to most people who nevertheless firmly believe in it and regard its function as sacred. (...) The biological, physical and astrophysical sciences are the current ways by which pass the knowledge, the truth, the life beyond the conceivable daily, materially. It is therefore not surprising that biochemists and physicists are involved in philosophy, metaphysics, and morality. They are the new prophets of the new “religion”: that of the spirit summarizing the laws of matter, energy and time in mathematical formulas ... These obscure institutions escape the rules of ethics but they impose their truth. » (M.Otte, Prehistory of Religions, p.127-127)

The artist DA Therrien is convinced that technology and religion form one and the same system of mass control. Both promise future individual liberation (paradise, cyberspace) to better dominate physical bodies.

Google-video / DA Therrien TX : Pandaemonium

For Therrien, technology-religion amplifies the effects of power, he even foresees a future technological Inquisition where today's machines can be used like the machines of the Middle Ages to torture bodies to make the mind docile. With *TX : Pandaemonium*, Therrien shows us that behind technology lies a desire for exponential power that guides humanity towards absolute totalitarianism. All of Comfort / Control's performances emphasize the powerlessness of man in the face of his technological creations ; here it is Frankenstein who wins and enslaves his creator.

Conclusion.

From the Time of the origins to the present day, we have seen that representations of the body have always oscillated between idealized body and real body, between loved and hated body, between alienated and liberated body, between fleshly and evanescent body. We have also seen that post-humanism represents the finality of biological man, puts an end to the cycle of the physical evolution of species as discovered by Darwin. We also know that the concept of the machine body since the Renaissance has made it possible to desacralize the primitive body in order to better submit it to the semiurgical manipulations of science and that the cyborg is indeed a reality of our time. Even if the extraordinary advances in medicine, neuroscience, pharmacology and orthopedics subject to codes of ethics and strict research protocol have their *raison d'être* by allowing thousands of individuals to have a comfortable life and to superior quality, it is undeniable that totalitarian drifts, admittedly marginal today, are also at work.

Even if the advent of the digital brain is unlikely these days, it is still the subject of a phenomenal amount of research that suggests its realization. According to the *Wired* magazine of March 2005, a dozen subsidized American laboratories are already receiving tens of millions of dollars from the Department of Defense to create intelligent robots and brain-computer interfaces.

We have also seen that at all times, man has sought to improve his condition and even to glimpse that “real life” was elsewhere than on earth : paradise, nirvana, cyberspace, etc. So much so that it is impossible to understand the challenges of post-humanism without grasping its theological and metaphysical dimension.

We now know that since the great ancient civilizations, the notion of a sacred body in harmony with the universe has deteriorated to the point of becoming an object of corruption and responsible for the misfortune of men. In all major religions, the flesh and blood body is a problem. It is this observation that allows us to grasp the metaphysical aspect of post-humanism in line with Manichean thought.

Note that post-humanism is a subculture that has more the allure of a sect. This does not mean that it is unimportant, let us not forget that Manichean thought has spread and strongly contaminated all religions until this day and has determined all of Western culture.

Since the dawn of time, the human body has oscillated between two diametrically opposed visions : the adored but unreal body and the real hated body; two notions that we tried to discover through the representation of the body in art.

At the beginning of the last century, Émile Durkheim, in his work entitled *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, demonstrated that religion is constitutive of culture and that it plays a social role in archaic societies and a political role in it. the societies of Antiquity as we have seen. “In any case, religion was already what it was to remain, the reflection of collective beliefs, of a localized experience, and of a policy vis-à-vis reality. “

We had to go back to the religion of Mesopotamia long before Zarathustra and the ancient dualistic religion of the ancient Persians with its god of good Ahura-mazda and its god of evil Ahriman and their eternal struggle which divides the whole world in two : the day and night, the pure and the impure, the soul and the body, the man and the woman ... For 4,000 years, the *Bible*, then the *New Testament* and finally the *Koran*, has presented us with nothingness, the hereafter as the only acceptable reality. Life is a disease, the flesh is despised and the tormented man seeks revenge and transforms “into hatred of the earth what was love of life and earthly things.” The body is the source of evil, the universal tempter, it is the body which is vitiated, distorted, and keeps the trace of the sin of the origins. The body is the corrupter; a principle of malignancy lives in him. It is the devil in his body, while the horn mind sponds to the divine. Descartes, subsequently, perpetuated this dualism by “logically” separating the body from the mind, worse by transforming the body into a machine to finally

find its finality in complete self-denial.

Of all the ancient writings, Manichaeism is making a phenomenal comeback via post-humanism at the start of the third millennium, where it is still the struggle between body and mind that dominates. Let us remember that Mani demanded the complete disappearance of the human creature, it is necessary that the man destroy all link with the matter because the world is abandoned to the evil and contaminates, infects the man himself of the same “disease. In the face of such a prospect, it would have been better if the man had not been.

These ideas are found among the Greeks with Plato (427-347) who treats the body as a coffin (soma / séma) then with Paul of Tarsus who invents the notion of “flesh” (sarx, meat) and certain Gnostics. (Deschamps, *Body hated and adored*, p.51 and 70) But the current of somatophobia is much broader. This disgust with the body is extended to everything that participates in bodily nature: the woman tempting man, the savages who are only their bodies, the horrible, disgusting and diabolical animals, nature which conceals evil spirits, the earth and all that it produces alive. This hatred of the body manifests itself mainly in a general persecution of life.

Exactly what postmodern cyberculture claims: the mind, (the soul) alone deserves to be saved from the degradation of the biological, delivered from the fatality of the mortal body. Once the hermetic mists of esoteric signs have dissipated, we can lift, finally in broad daylight, the veil and enter the secret sanctuary where perfect knowledge dispels all mystery: post-humanism is a universe without mystery, pure logos, post-modern version of ancient Manichaeism which has become the way of thinking of our time.

“We are tired of man!” (Nietzsche)

“After two thousand years of Platonic-Christian assaults against the body and the passions, anathema cast on its essence, human desire has gradually turned against itself, to engage in reverse in its tendency naturally affirming and creative, in the panicked and worried flight from another life, from another world, immutable, heavenly, eternal. » (Louis Godbout, *Did you meet Nietzsche today?* Le Devoir, 2000)

Destroy everything rather than continue like this and finally disappear into cyberspace / paradise. We are indeed devastated. So as well end it once and for all. No more revolt, depressions, wars, hatred; and finally the bliss of the inorganic noosphere.

“All the impulses tend to reconstitute what existed. An instinct would only be the expression of a tendency inherent in any living organism and which pushes it to reproduce, to reestablish a previous state which it has been forced to give up under the influence of external disturbing forces ... The state the former, original of the living would be the non-living, and it follows for Freud that the last goal of the drive is the return to the inorganic. (...) The ego wants, so to speak, nothing other than its rest. (...) All the drives are therefore located under the “principle of nirvana” and tend to “the suppression of internal tension”; as

much the death drive (Thanatos) or the life drive (Eros) are now oriented towards the stability of the inorganic and become the expression of an aspiration “of all living beings to return to the rest of the inorganic world. » (Dreuwermann / Freud, *Le Mal*, 1996, p.214)

It is urgent to understand that all the theologies of domination focused mainly on the enslavement of nature are a dead end. All peoples have no doubt conceived domineering religions, but the operation seems to have failed everywhere. Because all the languages ??and writings which transcribe knowledge from generation to generation, whether they are the Upanisads, Taoism, Buddhism, Egyptian, Sumerian, Greek mythologies, African, Amerindian, aboriginal cosmogonies, the *Koran*, the *Bible*, the *Torah* including science and philosophy are only fragmentary and poetic accounts of a mystery which will always exceed us, the universe being in expansion and by the same fact in perpetual transformation. So much so that “our reason has limits. » (Kant). So it will be with post-humanism and its post-biological utopia.

“When nature becomes the property of man, it ceases to be immanent in him. It is his on the condition of being closed to him. If he puts the world in his power, it is to the extent that he forgets that he himself is the world: he denies the world but it is himself who is denied. Everything in my power (nature, woman, slave) announces that I have reduced what is similar to me to no longer exist for its own end but for an end which is foreign to it. Thus man undergoes the ricochet effect of his own alienation by becoming foreign to himself, alienated in a world which he himself has enslaved; where he lets himself be dictated by his own creations. » (Bataille, *Complete Works*, 1957)

“We live forever in the shadow of an arrogant hoax. “

Never has a god been so alive since he was declared dead. Cyberspace is filled with cyber gods as in the days of polytheistic societies, like so many promises of a cybersky future. This whole philosophy of the transcendence of the biological, this post-humanism, is still nourished from the same sources as in the past. This postmodern concept draws generously from this immense reservoir of archaic and religious mythologies. And it is through esotericism, that is to say by behaving like a sect of initiates who have deciphered the secret codes that post-humanism operates the junction with historical religions.

But let us never forget that cyberspace, like all universal myths, does not exist, that it is a landscape of the “Western” mind obsessed with its electronic creations. In all cultures and at all times, the stories sung or told concealed mysterious and abstract places, such as cyberspace, where hallucinations and collective memories mingled. What the philosophers of post-humanism present to us as the cybersky is in reality a place which was described by Homer, 7th centuries BC, as Hades, “the invisible place, eternally without exit, where souls, lost in Darkness (cyberspace), have consciously agreed to pervert themselves. It is the total, definitive, irremediable failure of human existence. » (Dictionary of symbols, p.405-406)

“This invisible place eternally without exit” is it not this famous cyberspace

where souls, like the images of a video-installation, turn in a loop; where the story “comes full circle”, finally digitized, sampled, endlessly recycled and endlessly transcribed. Imagine the “me” digitized in audiovisual waves.

“The looping is characteristic of a story read at full speed as if it were captured by optical scanning. We can recompose it, transcribe it or clone it according to a dominant metamorphosis... (...) Roland Barthes once declared that “endless repetition is the dominant ideological form. » (Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, in *Aesthetics of media arts*, p.431)

All art has a religious foundation and the post-humanist is no exception. Post-humanism is positioned as universal salvation while it expresses only a partial and downright restricted perspective, confined to the technological West. There is no other authentic dialogue with the other visions of other cultures, on the contrary there is a rupture when from the outset one proposes to other civilizations the only Western model as a pledge of prosperity while knowing that the planet land does not have the resources to support it. Our attempt to reduce welfare to just development, even sustainable, to divide the surface of the earth into economic zones are among the main reasons for our impasse.

“To transform the world, to intervene, is a responsibility and therefore a holy mission for the West. We cannot blame him for following his nature, his “dharma”: civilizing, evangelizing, developing, advocating human rights and their application throughout the world, in a word, a peacemaker. But the problem is, he tends to “identify the limits of his own worldview with the human horizon itself.” He feels threatened by any social order or system of values ??other than his own. He no longer sees others as primitives to be civilized, pagans to be evangelized, underdeveloped to be developed, oppressed to be liberated. (...) The “others” then only appear to him as voids to be filled, wax for his flame of rights and justice. The question seldom occurs to him: “what if Reality goes far beyond not only the interpretation that the West gives of it but the experience that man himself has or can have of it?” Or could it be that the West feels threatened in its “power” by the different reality of the other? »As if he did not accept at bottom« to be put by the other face to face with the limits of the West, of its values, of its critical reason, of its cosmology, anthropology and philosophy of life . (...) This is perhaps the reason why he absolutizes his otherwise brilliant values ??of: God, Man, Person, Autonomy, Democracy, Human Rights. He does not want to take his place in the universe. He wants the whole place. » (Robert Vachon, *Interculture*, cahier 144, p. 24-25, 2003)

It is unfortunately in this perspective of the neo-colonialist West that the modern technocracy is situated. Power is invested not in God, but in a megamachine which manages a complex system of interventions and parameters where all (professors, scientists, priests, politician, artists, citizens) work in the same unilateral direction i.e. in the sense that wants Capital. Capital as a megamachine commands and experts and politicians propose and vote the inevitable laws of its progress. People can’t even decide what’s good for them anymore, because they don’t know it, or rather, we’ve left it up to the experts to decide for us. The megamachine always puts us in front of the *fait accompli*, just like the drug Vioxx, GMOs and other processed foods. Take it or leave it and since we have

no choice to heal and feed ourselves ... We forget that life questions us as much about our actions as we can question about its meaning.

“We would like to emphasize that liberal democracy, which is now recognized as the best of regimes, is fragile, subject to excesses, and that circumstances no longer allow us, in this matter, the slightest error of judgment. One would like to suggest that the most prosperous part of the planet is spoiling the only model, for the moment, of overcoming the totalitarian temptation to which fear and misery lead elsewhere. If it should appear to the inhabitants of other nations who are seeking their way, that the life under our skies is not more worth living; that the air we breathe, in the proper and metaphorical sense, is perhaps soft but rarefied, and is, in the long run, no more breathable; that we are leaving the lands conquered by freedom fallow and that our democracy is, for this reason, more apparent than real; that we surrender our conscience to the guidance of experts; that our thoughts are mechanisms and our actions are gestures; that our capacity to create is no more than a capacity to produce; that “human rights” and “the duty to interfere” are only incantations intended to serve as alibis for our capacity to act; brief that the absence from the yoke on our neck is justified only by the disappearance of the need, it is likely that the cycle of despair, opened at the beginning of the XXth century (in the West) , will reopen to the XXI^e in the rest of world, with the means of final destruction. “ (Slama, *L’angélisme exterminateur*, 1993, p.14)

“I feel a great dread inside me. “ (Podesta)

Western post-humanism is a fable that is akin to fantasy. Man has always preferred the narration of the story to philosophical reflection. Such is the “scandal” of the trial and death of Socrates : the first “democratic” society chose to sacrifice “the wisest of men” and by the same token, condemned philosophy. Not really, rather, philosophy has had its place as a particular form of world storytelling. Although demanding, it rubs shoulders with epic, dramatic, religious, mythical, poetic, theatrical and romantic discourse. But man has always preferred the ease of the story to the arduous search for the truth. For man is above all a poet. He likes to invent worlds made up of fantasies, dreams, utopias, worlds inhabited by strange, passionate, often monstrous characters, interchangeable universes in tune with the latest scientific knowledge and the advancement of knowledge. Thus, under the post-humanist narratives hide the same mythical stories which have helped man to live since the dawn of time. The post-humanist narrative is a new attempt to give meaning to what has none.

“The truth is, we don’t want the truth. “ (Hentsch)

Long before the first philosophical writings of ancient Greece, long before Egyptian hieroglyphics and Sumerian writing, the word of the tale, the poetry of songs were the oral accounts of a sacred history, guardians of human memory. Therein lies the undeniable strength of the story. Neither philosophy, nor theology, nor science have always been, the story, yes. The story is of all time and is transmitted from generation to generation like a bequest, a tradition which does not suffer any other interpretation especially not that of the “philosophical truth” Man has always crowned the story with the illusion which is consensus at the

expense of reality. (Hentsch, Tell and Die 2002)

What the XXth century reveals: it's all psychological mess, social and political story of the fall Mesopotamian adopted and adapted under new names, that the same story is contingent on the entire history of humanity, the height of our collective psychosis that we still manage to control so little today. The invention of the cosmic fall of souls on earth, the creation of the soul, therefore, were undoubtedly seen as an extraordinary revelation : man had a cosmic origin. But in doing so, our ancient ancestors introduced an age-old duality between the celestial, pure soul and the earthly, impure body.

“As soon as man gives himself a celestial and even stellar origin, he can only despise his body. He feels foreign to his body and of divine kinship.
»(Deschamps, Body hated and adored, p.226)

The different theosophies and theologies thought up by an elite have thus invented a whole range of subterfuges in order “to deprive the modest man of his own thoughts and to make him rather loudspeakers repeating repetitive slogans and automatons in the service of collective passions. » (Hartmann) Like the primitive esoteric sects, a whole magico-religious language is still being put in place today; works of art become obscure, incomprehensible, scientific knowledge becomes hyperspecialized, elitist, impenetrable, language reserved only for initiates incomprehensible to the understanding of the greatest number.

Thus the initiates of post-humanism in their attempts to “make new” still repeat the same old formulas of ancient Manichaeism “relifted” and served in the fashion of the day. So all these stories that we like to tell ourselves about our future cyber ascension, are only simulacra of ancient saviors to make us forget the rampage of nature, the tears in the community of men and the inequalities between the Western technocratic elite and the masses. laborious exploited as in the days of the great Sumerian and Egyptian empires.

It is clear that from Sumer, religions of slavery were created for political purposes. The power of the gods compensates for the all too obvious human weakness by legitimizing a royal power capable of resisting conflicts and other forces of disintegration exerted against it. Let us not forget that violence between individuals, between clans and families was always likely to destabilize the regime. It was therefore necessary “to establish a power over men, recognized by men, exercised by men, but reinforced and guaranteed by the gods.” “ (Hatzfeld The roots of religion, 1993, p. 219)

“The justification for social control in the modern world was old: human beings are sinners, this is why evil and suffering exist on earth. Human beings are sinners because original sin separated them from God; (...). This was the source of all the other separations: patriarchy, authority, hierarchy, the division of humanity into leaders and followers, owners and workers, separation of each individual from the other. » (Greil Marcus, Lipstick Traces, 1998)

“Neither Fault nor Savior. We don't have to be saved from a fault that doesn't exist. “

We live under the sign of a non-existent fault, forged from nothing, more than 30 centuries ago, by Mesopotamian priests hungry for power. Original sin is a theological invention for the purposes of political control of the masses, the grandest diversion of life. It is hard to imagine that the Mesopotamian fall caused a profound change in instinctive life; a real metaphysical petrification. We will have to admit one day that the invention of this original fall, without being the sole cause of psychopathologies, nevertheless conceals within it a number of neuroses, perversions, psychoses and is responsible for the existential malaise of man. Even more, knowing that the fault is at the service of a fundamentally despotic project of enslaving populations as a survival strategy.

Like this hatred of life, post-humanism, the quintessential “neo-Mesopotamian” Gnostic philosophy, has destruction in its heart and in its blood. Against the world, it opposes an anti-world, cyberspace and declares a ruthless war against life in the image of biblical religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) where human destiny is subject to a future life outside its biology. . If, as historians claim, “Western history begins in Sumer in Mesopotamia”, then post-humanism is the logical conclusion of the negative thinking that arose out of the Mesopotamian fall that has been passed down from generation to generation through countless cultures for nearly four thousand years. This hatred of life has put the human out of the game and consequently, a myriad of ideologies of death have proliferated.

“The case is metaphysical but above all ethical. (...) Schopenhauer believes that asceticism, a hatred turned against oneself, is the only future of pure wickedness, a future turned and reversed, a future that denies and atones. (...) Wickedness leads to hating, and it is the vestibule that leads to the exit, to the last phase of a philosophical existence: that which will consist in hating oneself, denying oneself as an individual. Wickedness would be the last level of Calvary, beyond which the effort to live ends, and where the effort to no longer live begins, to kill life in oneself. “ (François Guéry, Haine et destruction, 2002, p.31-51)

No one other than Camus was able to underline with Caligula the drama of the man too duped by social and political alienations. Caligula, a reasonable and good ancient emperor, first sought to make his people happy. But the untimely death of his sister Drusilla led him towards the Gnostic Manichaeism very popular in Roman times : the world as it is is no longer bearable. Caligula will become cruel and cynical and will sow boundless hatred towards people and the world. The absurdity of life makes happiness impossible; “So I need something that is perhaps insane but that is not of this world. “ (Camus, Caligula, p.110)

“Unused energy turns against itself and causes forms of self-destruction to appear in life. “This creates a situation of extreme tension in which the individual struggles. Greater discontent and, again and more and more, the need to let go of it. There is a name for this: the disease of life (post-humanism). Ill life, failing to be fulfilled, to be realized, then tends to find no way out except in

flight. “The flight into exteriority (mass media or cyberspace) in which it is a question of fleeing oneself and thus getting rid of what one is, of the weight of this unease and this suffering. This is a hallmark of the empire of the disease of life in our postmodern world. “Self-escape is the title under which we can put almost everything that happens before our eyes. » (...) It is for the unused energy of life to try to get rid of oneself, to forget oneself as life, to disappear: to die. Not from a physical death, but more essentially still, from not living one’s life, from dying as presence in the world, as Presence to oneself, to disappear in the flux of the inconsistent and the unreal of another life. ... ” (Serge Carfantan / Michel Henry, *Philosophy and spirituality*, lesson 90, p.7, <http://sergecar.club.fr>)

This decay process would be the consequence of the “decline of grand narratives” modern set up since the XVIIth century : precedence of the individual over the community, mastery of nature, supremacy of production / capitalist consumption ideology of technical progress and scientific, all forming a single thought capable of bringing together the members of society. But all these great stories are still experiencing major dysfunctions, let’s just think of the situation of human rights in the world in decline and what about that of women, the financial crisis caused by savage capitalism and the dramatic consequences. of a conception of the physical world seen strictly as a reservoir of raw materials.

At the psychological level, the atomic bomb of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Germanic extermination camps have left indelible and harmful traces in the minds of man. The other wars and genocides have also called into question the very principles of humanism and have contributed to the growth of ambient cynicism towards the great fundamental structures of our societies.

Since the time that we teach, since the time that we read books, magazines and newspapers, since the time that we watch documentaries and period films, deep down we know perfectly that everything is screwing up. camp, that we are sad to die and that we are content with it.

The philosopher Hannah Arendt, in 1963, already foresaw, in her essay *The conquest of space and the dimension of man* , that the more man projects himself into space, the more humanist perspectives will suffer from cybernetic assaults. “The considerable delay today of social and political development in comparison with techno-scientific progress. “

Whether post-humanist utopias are achievable or not does not really matter for the present moment. On the other hand, the story they imply is primordial and the heartbreaking observation : the earth’s ecosystem is getting poorer every day, its atmosphere is deteriorating, human populations have already reached their limit, so if man indulges in psychological depreciation while degrading his biological world to the point of no return; then the post-humanist will become reality. This is why it pours into the ecstasy of the sublime and presents itself as a new theology because the danger of a suicidal humanity is very real.

“The majority of contemporary currents have in common a fundamental impulse : the escape from the ‘ here ‘ to the ‘ elsewhere ‘ , out of the present in another

era. The escape in other directions tended, in the form of historicism and archaism, towards an idealized past ; and, under that of futurism, towards a future conceived as a technocracy totally deprived of soul. We come to the conclusion that our civilization of humanism has become a fixed “ archetype “ , and that there would then be no other alternative, if we see things biologically, than death or mutation. . “

“When the events themselves appear meaningless, the story has reached its limits. History is a product of the human mind designed so that events can be measured on the scale of human goals and strengths. To events like the ones we are experiencing today it seems that this no longer applies ; and this feeling is at the base of the impression that we have that “ the times are over ”, that we have entered an era on the fringes of history. This world on the fringes of history that Hamlet momentarily glimpsed in the mirror of his lost soul : a dislocated world. “

“What then does the duty dictated by the present situation of humanity and of civilization consist?” The answer to this question results directly from the diagnosis formulated in the preceding chapters, as far as we recognize its correctness. We are threatened with a universal catastrophe of which we cannot know if and when it will occur, nor what will be the outcome. But what we do know is that it is in line with certain evolutionary trends that we can now see and that we would therefore have to stop or divert before the threat becomes unavoidable. » (From Man, Thomas, *Era des Masses*, ch. Art and psychosis)

The contemporary development of technosciences represents a fundamental stake for man by the power of transformation that they develop. Because the use of science and technology has already led to deviations fatal for man, it is necessary to determine today whether there are limits that should not be crossed but which new technologies are inexorably approaching. And if there is a limit, it seems to lie in the use of these technologies with regard to man and his living environment. Originally, science was seen as a tool for understanding man and his environment, whereas now technosciences are actions on him and on the world. It is then appropriate to reflect on the cause of such a change in the conception that man has of himself and of what he can or must do. It is a question of measuring what upheavals, not only scientific but also political and cultural, to expect.

Once we have determined the direction of the current against which to swim, we know at the same time the opposite direction that we must take. Neither beast nor god, man compensates for his incompleteness by fraternal union with the other; it is the law of the polis , the city so dear to the Greek, place of convergence of multiple beings, individualized while forming a community. Quite the opposite of cyberspace where the spirits that compose it are condemned as in animal societies to reproduce the same collective behaviors because it is impossible to escape the rule.

In short we are condemned to action if not, then become evanescent like the ether and dare the ultimate transgression, this is the mandate that falls to us. It is not a question of playing the technophobic Cassandra, but rather of quickly

deciphering the “secret” codes of the messianic techno-shamanist presentations, because let us not forget: “any” transcendentalist “ideology which promises an” exit from the history, an overcoming of death ”contains in germ an apocalypse which would be its apotheosis. » (Haraway quoted in Virtual Speed, p.27)

In short, the only question remaining : how far are we prepared to let techno-sciences define our destiny?

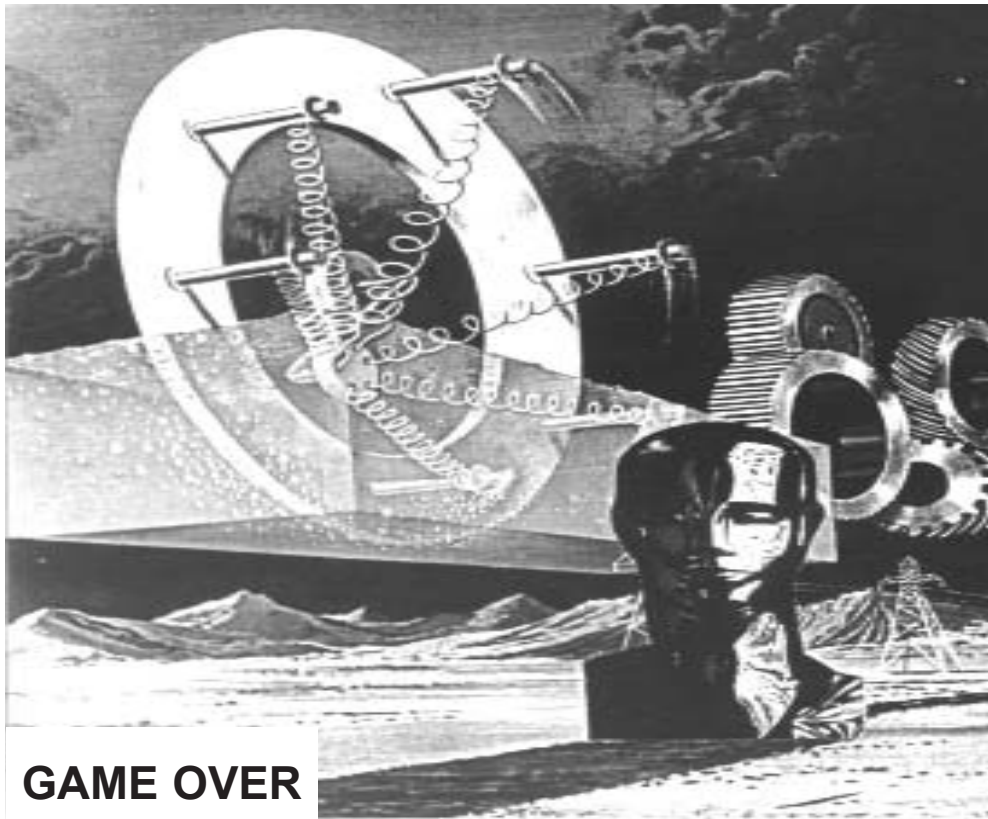
“Humanity has become foreign enough to itself to successfully experience its own destruction as an aesthetic enjoyment of the first order. “ (Walter Benjamin)

Epilogue 1

DE-GENESIS

“There was once a star upon which intelligent animals invented knowledge. It was the most arrogant and deceitful minute in universal history: but it was only a minute. Barely a few sighs from nature and the star froze, the intelligent animals had to die. “

Nietzsche, The Philosopher’s Book, 1873



GAME OVER

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